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Minutes.

deciding whether or not we are anxious to oppose any such agreement, I submit that in the first place Sir M. Lampson should be asked to discover just what the Egyptians have in mind. I think it would be unwise to define our attitude before we know exactly what is proposed;

An. telegraph to Cairo accordingly

London

22/11

Southern Sept  
J.A.

I think this is the appropriate procedure. We sh<sup>d</sup> also perhaps send a copy of this tel. to the W.O. & A.M. asking for obs<sup>s</sup>

There seems no harm intrinsically in the negotiation of a bon-voisinage agreement between Egypt & Italy with regard to the Libyan frontier and there might be some advantages. Hitherto we have taken the line that we should not oppose negotiation of separate Treaties between Egypt & other countries (Italy included) so long as we were kept informed (2) the objects did not run counter to

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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to the spirit or the terms of the Anglo-  
 Egyptian alliance. e.g. a part of non-  
 aggression might make it impossible for  
 Egypt to fulfil her obligations under  
 art 7 of the Treaty, by which she must come  
 to our aid as an ally if we are involved  
 in war.

? action as proposed.

R. J. Campbell  
 April 22.

Mr. Baghill

I agree 22/4  
 W.B.

Enquire

20.22 Apr.

Off. tel. submitted. Copies  
 of Cairo tel. 277 to A.M. } for obs.  
 W.O. } inf. each.

John Smith

23/4

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313

J 1870

From: EGYPT

22 APR 1938

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).  
April 20th, 1938.

D. 4.27.p.m. April 21st, 1938.

R. 4.30.p.m. April 21st, 1938.

No. 277.

-----000-----  
no 134

In my telegram (~~2 gr. emit.~~) I recorded the remark of Prime Minister that it might be no bad thing if principle of Sudan bon voisinage agreement with Italy were extended to a similar agreement direct between Egypt-Italy in regard to Libyan border.

2. During rush hours <sup>of</sup> final discussions with Prime Minister last week in regard to Rome conversations (then on verge of conclusion) His Excellency once more alluded to this idea with some ill-defined idea of bringing it into Rome conversations at eleventh hour. I was able for the moment to ride His Excellency off.

3. But I anticipate that now Rome conversations are finished we may be faced with a revival in practical form of idea at any moment - there have indeed already been what look like officially inspired press allusions to that effect - and tonight French Minister informed me he believed idea to be well to the fore and asked if I had any information.

4. It is not easy to see how effectively to discourage any such intention if it takes shape, however much one may instinctively misdoubt the desirability in our own interest of such direct contact between Italy-Egypt. But I should welcome your views and directions. If we are to take any action we should do so as soon as possible.

APR 22 1938  
F.O. REGISTRY.

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TO EGYPT

314

(J 1670/58/16).

Cypher telegram to Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).

Foreign Office. 25rd April, 1958. 6.30 p.m.

No. 280.

\*\*\*\*\*

Your telegram No. 277 [of April 20th: proposed Libya frontier agreement].

It is not clear what form of agreement the Egyptians contemplate, and it is impossible to define our attitude until we know exactly what is proposed. Please therefore ascertain from the Egyptian Government what they have in mind.

For your own information, there seems no harm intrinsically and there might be some advantage in a bon voisinage agreement between Egypt and Italy regarding the Libyan frontier. Our attitude hitherto has been that we should not oppose the negotiation of separate treaties between Egypt and other countries (including Italy) so long as (i) we were kept informed, (ii) the objects did not run counter to the spirit or the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance. A pact of non-aggression, for instance, might make it impossible for Egypt to fulfil her obligations under Article 7 of the Treaty.

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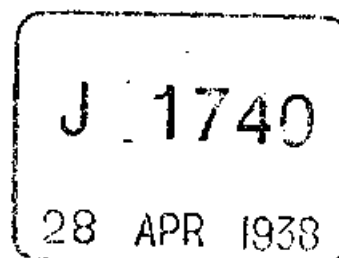
From: EGYPT.

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).  
April 27th, 1938.

D. 8.7.p.m. April 27th, 1938.

R. 8.40.p.m. April 27th, 1938.

No. 286.



-----oOo-----

Your telegram No. 260.

Italian Minister spoke to me this morning of the possibility of a bon voisinage agreement with Egypt in regard to Libyan frontier, possibility which had been raised with him by the Prime Minister.

2. In reply to his enquiry I told him that I could see no objection so long as it was perfectly clear that such agreement in no way conflicted with our Treaty Alliance with Egypt.

3. The Minister said that was absolutely clear.

4. Owing to the recent internal crisis (and my wish to avoid being suspected of intervening) coupled with the fact that the Prime Minister has also been in bed much of the time I have not yet had an opportunity for a conversation with him.



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6770

1938

J

J 1741

EGYPT and SUDAN

28 APR 1938

or:—

Registry Number } J 1741/38/16

TELEGRAM FROM  
Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).

No. 287 Decypher.

Dated 27th Apr: 1938

Received in Registry } 28th Apr: 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan

Proposed bon voisinage agreement between Egypt and Italy with regard to Libya frontier.

Refers to Cairo telegram No. 286 of 27th April (J 1740/38/16).

Records conversation with Prime Minister concerning proposed bon voisinage agreement between Egypt and Italy with regard to Libya frontier.

Last Paper.

(J1740)

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

F. G. Rome.

No. 666 Apr. 30.  
(with J1740 & cover on J1670)

F. H. W. O. } May 2  
Q. M. }

(with J1740 & out tel) on J1670

F. H. Adams. May 3  
(under cover to Mr. T. H. Crawley with J1740 & J1670.  
(Action completed.)

DP.  
16.5.38

Next Paper.

(J1822) J1775.

(Minutes.)

Submitted with J 1740

An Anglo-Egyptian non-aggression pact would have to be careful not to run counter to the terms of Article 7 of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance, 1936 (see E.O. tel No. 260 to Cairo in J 1670) providing for each Party's coming to the other's aid in the event of the latter becoming engaged in war.

We now presumably await further

information from the Egyptian Govt.

A. Copy sent to Govt.  
✓ AM

Mr. Beckett

Franklin  
28/4

(21.5.38) F. J. P.

This proposed agreement between Egypt

into a non-aggression pact)  
 Egypt and Italy has developed from  
 an extension of the Indian loan co-  
 agreement to a similar Italo-Egyptian  
 agreement in regard to the Syrian border ~~into~~  
~~as non-aggression pact~~. It is difficult to  
 see how the Egyptian Govt. could conclude  
 a genuine and effective non-aggression pact  
 without running counter to the terms of the  
 Treaty of Alliance. Presumably they wish to  
 conclude some sort of a pact for political  
 purposes but we shall have to see what it is  
 only concluded subject to suitable reservations.  
 I notice that none of these telegrams have  
 been repeated by Sir M. Lampson to Lord  
 Perth and I think that we should send  
 him by the bag on May 2<sup>nd</sup> (next Monday)  
 copies of this tel., and of J. 1740, and of the  
 telegrams to and from Cairo in J. 1670 in order  
 that he may be informed and placed in a  
 position to watch the proposed Italo-Egyptian  
 negotiations.

Mr. Baggett.

Southampton Dept.  
 29/4

R. Comandante *[Signature]* 28.4.38.

A non aggression pact could without I think  
 any very great difficulty be so framed  
 as not to conflict with the Treaty of  
 Alliance of 1936 - see *[initials]* in line  
 Article 10 of that Treaty: and Iraq  
 who has a similar treaty of Alliance  
 has concluded such pacts in terms  
 of which we find nothing to disapprove  
 but never the less it is very probable  
 that particularly because Italy  
 will have nothing to do with the  
 L of N - there will be difficulties  
 in this case.

WLB 30/4

NO. 30. apr.

Yes. Done  
 Le

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J 1741

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Major Cawthorn, of the War Office, spoke to me yesterday with reference to Cairo telegrams Nos. 277, 286, 287 and our telegram No. 260 to Cairo. He said he did not see how it was possible for Egypt to conclude a non-aggression pact with Italy without infringing the terms of Article 7 of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance of 1936. I replied that this difficulty was very prominent in our minds also and that we had pointed it out to Sir Miles Lampson, who in his turn mentioned the matter to the Egyptian Government (our telegram No. 260 to Cairo and Cairo telegram No. 287). It seemed to us, however, that for the moment there was nothing we could do but to wait and see what detailed proposals the Egyptian Government had in mind (Cairo telegram No. 287). Major Cawthorn agreed.

*Lampson*

30th April 1938.

*Seen by Mr. Bentinck*

*J. 30/4*

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J 1741  
28 APR 1938

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From EGYPT.

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).

27th April, 1938.

D. 9.12 p.m.

27th April, 1938.

R. 11.00 p.m.

27th April, 1938.

No. 287.

\*\*\*\*\*

My telegram No. 286.

At the Palace luncheon today Prime Minister told me that it was not so much Bon Voisinage agreement as non-aggression pact with Italy that he had in mind. He would give me full details later on. His intention was to negotiate in Rome and not here and keep us fully informed either through Lord Perth or here. I suggested the latter would probably be easier course and he seemed to agree.

2. I observed that in case of any form of agreement essential thing was that it should be in full harmony with our alliance. He assured me we need have no doubts whatever on that score and repeated that we should be consulted most fully throughout.

APR 28 1938  
RECEIVED  
REGISTRY

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J

J 1795  
321  
MAY 1938

Registry Number } J 1795/38/16

FROM Sir M. Lampson,  
Cairo.

No. 454 (327/183/38)

Dated 21st April,  
1938.

Received in Registry } 2nd May,

J: Egypt and Sudan

Egyptian Press reactions to the Anglo-Italian Agreement

Transmits a memorandum on the Egyptian press reactions to the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

Last Paper.

J1741

References.

~~Egypt~~

(How disposed of.)

F. A. Rome.

Ms. 74 May 13

(Action completed.)

21.5.38

(Index)

Next Paper.

J1794

(Minutes.)

The reactions of the Egyptian press to the Anglo-Italian Agreement are generally those which were to be expected. The violent lament of the Wafd over Egypt's lost independence and the strong satisfaction of the Govt. organs are in line with previous utterances.

The only new feature is the emphasis laid by some papers, notably the "Mokattam", on the triumph of Italy. It is of course a useful argument in favour of their usual theme of a non-aggression pact with Italy.

Southern Dept. a.a.

Newsp. Dept. a.a.

Copy Rome. Elong.

P. L. Rose 9/5.

It is a pity that important Egyptian newspapers should assert that the Anglo-Italian agreement is a triumph for Italy - paras. 4 and 5.

1. Cambridge University  
10.4.  
10.11.38

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Press Reaction Towards the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

Press reaction towards the Anglo-Italian agreement is sharply divided. Whilst the Government and Saadist organs are satisfied that Egypt's rights have been adequately safeguarded, the Wafdist papers declare that the illusion of Egypt's independence is completely destroyed. The independent Press, whilst expressing great approval that an agreement has been concluded are inclined to reserve their opinion in matters of detail.

2. By an unfortunate oversight the "Ahram", the paper which has the widest circulation in Egypt and by far the most reliable private news service, reproduced as follows on the morning of the 17th April the passage relating to the periodical exchange of information on troop movements as received from its Rome correspondent:

"The two parties have agreed to exchange from time to time information regarding the expected administrative movements or the redistribution of armed forces in their Overseas Colonies, viz. the countries situated on or round the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, Egypt, the Sudan, Italian East Africa, British Somaliland, Kenya, Uganda and the north of Tanganyika.

3. Not unnaturally the Wafdist organs seize upon this as a godsend and shout under headlines that the status of Egypt is reduced to that of a "colony". Whilst the "Journal d'Egypte" of the 18th makes a point of correcting this deplorable misapprehension it is not till the evening of the 18th that the correct version is prominently reproduced in the Government organs. Nevertheless the "Misri" asserts categorically that in a secret document which has not been communicated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the passage as quoted above is indubitably included.

4. The "Ahram" is of opinion that the most important section of the agreement is the assertion of Egypt's ownership of the Suez Canal. The withdrawal of troops from Libya is, according to this paper, another source of satisfaction. It deduces - and this is not without significance in the light

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of the "Ahram's" attitude during the "sanctions" period - that Great Britain has at long last been obliged to abandon the idealistic principles of the League of Nations and to face facts. Italy has emerged victorious from the struggle and the prestige of her leader has been enormously enhanced. Whilst reserving its opinion until the publication of the official text as to whether Egypt's interests have been safeguarded or diminished the "Ahram" expresses its surprise that the documents were not released in Cairo at the same time as in Rome and London.

5. The "Mokattam" whilst also reserving its opinion till the text becomes available, points out that this agreement is another instance of the efficacy of dictatorship régimes. It had been generally supposed that Mussolini was playing a game of "bluff", but this has now been proved not to have been the case. It condemns the previous policy of His Majesty's Government in their attitude towards Italy and generally expresses the view "better late than never".

6. Referring with satisfaction to the Anglo-Italian assertion of Egypt's rights in the Suez Canal, the "Mokattam" expresses the opinion that if this declaration could be reaffirmed in the form of an International Treaty, comprising all the interested Powers, the financial obligations devolving upon Egypt in the defence of the Canal would be considerably reduced. It also expresses the hope that the Government will maintain Egypt's rights in negotiating with Italy the subject of the Western Frontier.

7. The "Syassa", in common with the "Balagh" and the "Dustour", makes a point of declaring that Egypt's participation in the conversations has been complete, and that the agreement would provide an opportunity for entering into direct negotiations with Italy on the subject of the Western Frontier.

8. The "Balagh" rather cleverly refutes the Wafdist organs' allegation that Egypt has played no part in the conversations,

/by

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by asking whether France, Greece and Turkey, whose interests in the Mediterranean are not inconsiderable, were present at the discussions which took place in Rome and in Cairo.

9. The "Misri" and "Wafd al Misri" in publishing Nahas Pasha's declaration that Egypt had not been invited to express an opinion about the Suez Canal, Lake Tsana, the Sudan frontier, and Libya, and that "worst of all" Egypt had been declared a "colony", repeat "ad nauseam" their previous blatherings about Egypt's lost independence. The "Misri" makes great play with the fact that the rights of the Coptic Church in Abyssinia have been totally ignored. The "Bourse Egyptienne" and the "Giornale d'Oriente" express their entire satisfaction with the terms of the agreement.

10. If, from a press point of view, it is permissible to make observations, it is suggested that the Egyptian Government, in the course of the conversations in Rome, would have been well-advised to have given the greatest prominence in the Press (without, of course, disclosing details) to the almost daily consultations between Mohamed Pasha Mahmoud and the Ambassador, rather than confine the publication of important contacts to one small sentence in the Speech from the Throne; and that the relevant portions of the text should have been made available to the Press in Cairo at the same time as in London.

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12	J	J 1797 329
1797		2 MAY 1938

Registry Number 1797/38/16. FROM Sir M. Lampson Cairo. No. 457 (327/184/38). Dated 22nd Apr. 1938. Received in Registry 2nd May. 1938. J: Egypt and Sudan.	<b>Reaction in Egypt to the Anglo-Italian Agreement.</b> Transmits copies of an extract from the Parliamentary proceedings of 18th April, 1938 which contains the Prime Minister's statement regarding the Anglo-Italian negotiations in reply to a Wafdist interpellation. The statement is a refutation of the charge that the Egyptian Government were not properly consulted. The local reaction has, apart from the factions in opposition of the Wafd, been favourable. The Government is expecting a debate in the Chamber on the subject on 17th April. (Copy sent to Rome).
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Last Paper. 1795 References. Cairo Tel. No. 264 J 15th Apr. 1938 J1587/38/16 (Print.) 6/5 Egypt (UNITED) incl. (How disposed of.)	(Minutes.) Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha's statement should have disposed of many of the stupid accusations made by the Wafd. 10/9/38 Anthony / G.M.H. Sept 20th Dec 4/5
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(Action completed.) SP. 11.5.38 16.38 Next Paper. J1822	(Index.) 1/5 Sir M. Lampson has by now received the full text of the Anglo-Italian Agreement. We are sending out to Cairo by tomorrow's bag the <del>Handwritten</del> report of the debate in the House of Commons on May 2nd and have drawn special attention to the following passage in the Prime Minister's speech:- "Egypt, of course, in virtue of her special relations, has also been kept closely informed and not only that, but on all questions which actually affect Egyptian interests there has been collaboration with her, and no decisions affecting those interests have been taken without prior consultation and full concurrence on her part." 13905 10/36 F.O.P.
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This should afford confirmation that the charge <sup>made by</sup> ~~of~~  
 Nahas Pasha that the Egyptian Government was not  
 properly consulted, is untrue.

V. C. *concordant* *continues*

*LA* 4th May 1938

See within letter from the Wafd  
 Committee (Alexandria) of 25th. May

*by* x

*concordant*

3/5 (See enclosure letter)

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No.457.  
(527/184/38)

11797 BRITISH EMBASSY  
CAIRO, 330  
MAY 1938 22nd April, 1938.

My Lord,

I have the honour to forward herewith an extract from the Parliamentary proceedings of 18th April which contain the Prime Minister's statement regarding the Anglo-Italian negotiations in reply to a Wafdist interpellation.

2. As will be seen, it is a clear exposition of the relevant facts and a categorical refutation of the Nahasist's charges that the Egyptian Government was not properly consulted on matters directly concerning it.

3. The local reaction to the accord has, apart from the factions in opposition of the Wafd (see my telegram No.267 of April 13th) been favourable and the fact, now fully demonstrated, that the British Government conducted these negotiations with full respect for Egypt's sovereignty will, it may be hoped, dispel any general suspicions that we may have been negotiating over Egypt's head in questions of direct concern to her.

4. The Government, however, is expecting a debate in the Chamber on the subject on April 27th, and Dr. Heikal Pasha asked the Oriental Secretary whether we could let the Government have the full text of the Anglo-Italian Agreement to study with a view to refuting Wafdist arguments. He was told that we had not yet received the text. It was suggested to him that, if he needed the text in a hurry, the Egyptian Minister

The Right Honourable

Viscount Halifax,

K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,

&c., &c., &c.,

/in

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in Rome might be asked by telephone to send a copy by Air Mail.

5. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant.

*Arthur W. Rampson*

AMBASSADOR.

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EXTRACT.

CHAMBRE DES DEPUTES.

Septième Législature.

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Première Session.

Troisième séance, le Lundi 18 Avril, 1938.

La séance est ouverte à 6 heures 30 de l'après-midi, sous la présidence de l'honorable Bahi ed Dine Barakat Pacha.

... ..

Mohammed Mahmoud Pacha, Président du Conseil des Ministres. Les négociations qui se sont déroulées entre les Gouvernements Britannique et Italien ont abordé les questions et les problèmes en suspens entre les deux pays dans les diverses parties du globe. Très peu, dans ces questions et problèmes, intéressait l'Égypte. Néanmoins, notre Alliée a loyalement mis le Gouvernement Egyptien au courant des entretiens qui ont eu lieu entre les deux parties et des points sur lesquels elles étaient tombées d'accord relativement à la Méditerranée et au Proche-Orient, afin que, les problèmes de l'Afrique Orientale Italienne venant à être abordés, la question pût faire l'objet d'autres négociations auxquelles prendrait part le Gouvernement Egyptien en ce qui concerne ses intérêts, du Soudan et ses frontières. (Vifs applaudissements). A ce propos, il n'y a pas eu autre chose que la conclusion d'un accord de bon voisinage par rapport à l'Afrique Orientale Italienne, d'une part, et, d'autre part, Kénia, la Somalie Anglaise et le Soudan. Et c'est en raison de ses droits sur ce dernier pays que l'Égypte a signé l'accord en question.

Le Gouvernement Britannique a obtenu du Gouvernement Italien une nouvelle affirmation des assurances qu'il lui avait données sur ses obligations en ce qui concerne le Lac Tsana, obligations qui remontaient à l'accord conclu entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Abyssinie en 1902. Comme le Gouvernement Egyptien n'avait pas obtenu des assurances

/claires

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claires a ce sujet, le Cabinet que j'ai l'honneur 333  
de présider a eu soin de demander au Gouvernement  
Italien des assurances spéciales pour l'Egypte. Et je  
suis heureux de vous annoncer que nous les avons obtenues.  
(Applaudissements).

Quant à nos droits sur le Canal de Suez, ils n'ont  
jamais fait l'objet d'un marchandage quelconque. Tout  
au contraire, les entretiens anglo-italiens au sujet du  
Canal ne firent qu'affirmer le respect <sup>de la Convention</sup> signée à Constantinople  
le 29 Octobre 1888 et la résolution de se conformer à ses  
dispositions pour assurer le libre passage de ce Canal.  
Le Gouvernement Egyptien a tenu à se faire communiquer  
ces affirmations échangées entre deux des parties  
contractantes de cette Convention, en veillant à ce que  
cette communication confirmât des droits de l'Egypte en  
tant qu'Etat propriétaire du Canal et détenteur de la  
souveraineté sur cette voie de communication, et que,  
d'autre part, elle fût une confirmation de ladite  
Convention (Applaudissements).

Par conséquent, rien, dans les négociations anglo-  
italiennes, ne touchait les frontières de l'Egypte  
indépendante, ou l'intégrité de son territoire, ou ses  
droits sur le Canal de Suez. Quant aux questions se  
rapportant à l'Egypte ou au Soudan, elles ont été ou  
bien réservées pour des négociations ultérieures,  
auxquelles participerait l'Egypte, ou bien réglées de la  
manière qui sauve-garde le mieux les droits de notre pays.

Le Gouvernement Egyptien s'intéresse au plus haut  
point au bon voisinage qui devrait exister entre l'Egypte  
et l'Italie. Il examinera la question dans des négociations  
entre les deux pays.

Les négociations qui ont eu lieu entre le Gouverne-  
ment Italien et le Gouvernement Egyptien représenté par  
notre Ministre à Rome se sont déroulées dans une atmosphère

/de

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de parfaite sérénité. Je ne puis, à ce propos, que 334  
 signaler combien le Gouvernement Italien nous a témoigné  
 de bonnes dispositions et de sincère désir de maintenir  
 les relations cordiales et la bonne entente entre nos  
 deux pays. Je ne puis pas, non plus, ne pas souligner  
 la réelle amitié et la coopération loyale qui se sont  
 manifestées au cours de nos entretiens avec notre Allié.  
 Je mentionnerai, tout particulièrement, les louables efforts  
 qui ont été déployés au cours de ces entretiens par  
 S.E.L'Ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne.

Les documents relatifs à l'accord de bon voisinage  
 et les notes échangées entre les deux Gouvernements à  
 ce sujet ont été déposés sur les Bureaux du Sénat et de  
 la Chambre, pour être à la disposition des honorables  
 membres du Parlement (Applaudissements).

L'honorable Mohamed Fikri Abaza demande quel est le  
 caractère juridique de ces documents, quel est le rôle  
 qui incombe à la Chambre en ce qui les concerne; ces  
 documents lui sont-ils soumis pour approbation ou simple-  
 ment à titre d'information.

Mohammed Mahmoud Pacha, Président du Conseil des  
 Ministres. - Ces documents vous sont soumis pour que  
 vous en preniez connaissance.

Mohammed Hussein Haikal Pacha, Ministre d'Etat,  
 déclare que les dispositions de l'article 46 de la  
 Constitution indiquent les traités qui doivent être  
 soumis au Parlement pour leur approbation. Ces traités  
 sont ceux qui entraînent soit une modification du  
 territoire de l'Etat, soit une diminution de ses droits  
 de souveraineté, soit une dépense à la charge du Trésor  
 Public, ou qui porteraient atteinte aux droits publics ou  
 privés des citoyens Egyptiens.

Quant aux autres traités, ils ne sont soumis au  
 Parlement qu'à titre d'information, et ils sont accompagnés  
 d'un exposé.

/L'honorable

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L'honorable Abdel Hamid Abdel Hak demande s'il 335  
existe des procès-verbaux de ces négociations, et s'il  
est possible de les déposer sur le Bureau de la Chambre.

Mohammed Mahmoud Pacha, Président du Conseil des  
Ministres.- Tous les documents ont été déposés. En tout  
cas, les négociations dont il s'agit sont récentes, mais  
il en existe d'autres qui ont eu lieu depuis un an et  
demi environ et dont les procès-verbaux n'ont pas été  
rédigés jusqu'à présent.

L'honorable Abdel Hamid Abdel Hak dit que ces  
procès-verbaux existent.

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EXEMPLE

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+ V<sup>2</sup>  
11/VI

A SON EXCELLENCE LE MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES  
DE GRANDE BRETAGNE.

LONDRES.

Excellence,

Le comité du Wafd de Wékelet El Khodar et de la Sekka El Guedida à Alexandrie, exprimant la pensée des ulémas, des médecins, des commerçants, des étudiants et de toutes les classes de la Nation, proteste énergiquement contre les négociations Anglo-Italiennes, déclarant qu'elles ont porté préjudice à l'Egypte tant au point de vue politique que moral, atteint sa situation parmi les peuples. Qu'elles ont entouré notre indépendance, obtenu au prix du sang pur versé, de beaucoup de doute. Le Comité considère ces négociations comme blessant l'amour propre des Egyptiens et atteignant leur dignité comme Nation libre. Pour ces motifs désignés dans le grave appel du Wafd Egyptien en date du 3 Mai 1938 relatifs aux documents de Rome, nous accusons nos alliés britanniques d'avoir violé les droits du pays obtenus par le Wafd, sous la présidence de S.E. Moustafa El Nahas Pacha, droits inscrits dans le traité du 26 août 1936. Le Comité fait retomber sur les Anglais la faute découlant de la perte d'un quelconque des droits égyptiens.

Nous vous avisons que l'accord de Rome est com-

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me une arme dirigé contre les Egyptiens qui ne seront  
tranquilles que quand votre Gouvernement renoncera à  
cet accord contraire à tout esprit de Justice.

NOUS vous prions de transmettre à Votre Gouver-  
nement cette protestation accompagnée de notre vœu que  
le Gouvernement Britannique ainsi que le Gouvernement  
Italien et la Société des Nations qui lutte pour le  
droit, ne perdront pas l'amitié de l'Egypte et des  
Egyptiens.

Le Secrétaire Général

*M. Saadallah*

Le Président

*M. Khayat*

Alexandrie, le 25 Mai 1938.

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13	J	J 1822 341 3 MAY 1938
19	EGYPT and SUDAN	

Registry Number } J 1822/38/16

TELEGRAM FROM  
Sir M. Lampson, Cairo.

No. 298 Decypher

Dated 2nd May,  
Received } 1938.  
in Registry } 3rd May,

J: Egypt and Sudan

Proposed agreement between Egypt and Italy.

Refers to Foreign Office telegram No. 260 of 23rd April, 1938 (J 1670/38/16).

Spoke to the Prime Minister of Egypt accordingly on 1st May. The Prime Minister said that he had instructed Bedawi Pasha to prepare a draft and would consult His Majesty's Government fully before taking any action thereon. Warned him of the difficulty of reconciling a pact of non-aggression with the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian alliance.

Last Paper.

(J1741) J1797

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Copies sent to  
Rome, W.O.  
G.M. on J1840.

(Minutes.)

Sir M. Lampson has warned the Prime Minister, and we can only wait until we see what is said in the Egyptian draft. Though it may well be necessary to discourage the project unless the draft is very anodyne.

Ans. await further

Copies Roma Emb.

W.O. } ref.  
Am. }

Mr Beckett

Southern Dept  
9/1/38  
4/1

20th Div

3/5

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

DR  
16.5.38

1/2/38

Next Paper.

(J1840) J1831

The War Office do not appear to like the idea of this non-aggression pact between Egypt and Italy (see record of conversation in J. 1741); the Air Ministry have informed me by telephone



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FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

5th May, 1938.

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(J 1831/38/16)

I understand from the Egyptian Division that Hansard is not sent to missions abroad. I therefore enclose an extract from Hansard of the 2nd May reporting the House of Commons debate on the Anglo-Italian Agreement. I would draw your special attention to the following passage on page 543, which was inserted in the draft of the Prime Minister's speech at my suggestion:-

"...All through these negotiations we have been  
 "in the closest touch with the Dominions, who have been  
 "advised of the progress of them from the very beginning.  
 "Egypt, of course, in virtue of her special relations, has  
 "also been kept closely informed and not only that but on  
 "all questions which actually affect Egyptian interests  
 "there has been collaboration with her, and no decisions  
 "affecting those interests have been taken without prior  
 "consultation and full concurrence on her part".

(Sd.) V. C.

J. C. Sterndale Bennett, Esq., C.M.G., M.C.  
 British Embassy,  
 Cairo.

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J

J 1840  
345  
5 MAY 1938

Registry }  
Number } 1840/38/16.

TELEGRAM FROM  
Sir M. Lampson, Cairo.

No. 303 decypher.

Dated 4th May, 1938

Received }  
in Registry } 5th May, 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Proposed agreement between Egypt and Italy.

Refers to Cairo telegram No. 298 of 2nd May 1938 (J 1822/38/16). Reports that he spoke to the Prime Minister of Egypt again on 4th May, emphasizing that whilst a "bon voisinage" agreement regarding the Libyan issue had certain advantages, the position was much less clear in regard to a "non-aggression" pact. The Prime Minister gave an assurance that he would not agree to anything which ran counter to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and repeated that His Majesty's Government would be consulted fully throughout.

Last Paper.

(J1822) J1831  
References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Tel. Cairo  
No. 279. May 7

J. G. Rome  
No. 779 May 10  
(inward tel. on J1840  
+ J1822)  
J. G. W. O. } May 10  
a.m. }  
(inward tel. on J1840  
+ J1822)

(Action completed.)

DP.  
Y. 6. 38.

Next Paper.

Y1859  
(J1863)

(Minutes.)

We can only wait to see what  
Bedawi Pasha's draft contains.

Copies Rome Emb. )  
two  
a.m. } up.

Mr. Reckitt  
Sontag/Sept 5/4

London  
5/5

I submit herewith a draft telegram to Sir Miles Lampson drawing his attention to our despatch No. 79 of January 18th (E 7282/398/65) in which we furnished him with information regarding a non-aggression pact entered into by Iraq with Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, and suggesting for his consideration that he should consider whether he thinks it desirable to inform Bedawi Pasha of the precautions taken to ensure that this pact would not prejudice Iraq's obligations under her Treaty of Alliance with us.

V. C. ...

7th May 1938

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*amended copy 91840/38/12*

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From EGYPT.

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).  
4th May, 1938.

D. 7.10 p.m. 4th May, 1938.

R. 8.00 p.m. 4th May, 1938.

No. 303.

0:0:0:0

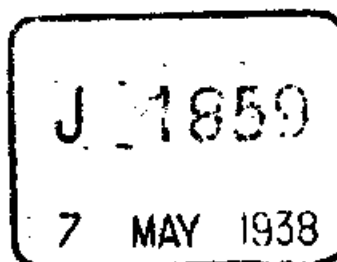
My telegram No. 298.

I spoke to the Prime Minister more formally this morning on the lines of your telegram No. 277. I emphasised that whilst a "Bon voisinage" agreement regarding Libyan <sup>boundary</sup> ~~zone~~ had certain advantages, the position was much less clear in regard to "non-aggression" pact and I referred specifically to paragraph 7 of our treaty.

2. Prime Minister assured me once more that there could be no question of his agreeing to anything which in any way whatever ran counter to our treaty. On my asking point blank what type of agreement he contemplated with Italy (a) bon voisinage or (b) non-aggression he admitted that he was still quite vague as he had handed the whole matter over to Bedawi to draft as he thought fit. He repeated that we should be consulted fully throughout.

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No. 422.  
(1/671/38)



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British Embassy,  
Rome.

29th April, 1938.

CONFIDENTIAL

My Lord,

Apart from certain questions on which the Egyptian Government were consulted in the course of the recent Anglo-Italian negotiations and on which no serious difficulty presented itself, (namely, those concerning the agreements and declarations regarding the diminution of the Italian forces in Libya, the exchange of military information, certain areas in the Middle East, the military duties of natives of Italian East Africa, and the substance of the Protocol, including the paragraph regarding British commercial and other interests in Ethiopia), there were certain questions on which difficulty arose at the last moment, namely, the desire of Egypt to be formally associated with the United Kingdom and Italy in signing the Protocol for the purposes of concluding the tripartite bon voisinage agreement and to receive direct assurances in connexion with the Anglo-Italian Declarations regarding the Suez Canal and Lake Tsana, which formed two of the annexes to the Protocol. Although these difficulties occurred after the termination of my formal conversations with the Italian Government, it was of course necessary, in reaching the solution which was eventually found, to consult the Italian Government, and I accordingly think it well to record briefly the course of events on these subjects in

a/

The Right Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.G. G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
FOREIGN OFFICE.

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184471/23/22

a separate despatch which I would beg Your Lordship to read as a post-scriptum to the series of despatches, recording my conversations with the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, which ended with my despatch No. 416 of April 27th.

2. I should perhaps prefix my remarks by saying that throughout the complicated discussions which ensued the closest touch was maintained with the Egyptian Minister at Rome, who showed himself most accommodating and whose constructive grasp of the situation certainly facilitated the satisfactory settlement which was ultimately reached.

3. By Thursday April 14th, two days before the day fixed for the signature of the Agreement, the Egyptian Minister in Rome had still not received his Full Powers to sign the bon voisinage agreement, and on that date the Egyptian Prime Minister informed His Majesty's Ambassador in Cairo that he had it in mind to send Bedawi Pasha to Rome in order to assist the Egyptian Minister. On the evening of the same day Sir M. Lampson informed the Prime Minister that it was the intention to sign the Agreement on the 16th. This communication apparently came as something of a shock to the Egyptian Government, who appear not to have realised that signature was contemplated so early. Sir M. Lampson reported that Bedawi Pasha was still inclined to make difficulties in regard to Lake Tsana and anxious to secure some direct form of assurance to Egypt.

1500/32/10

4. The following day (April 15th) Sir Miles Lampson reported, in his telegram No. 267 to Your Lordship, that the Wafd Executive Committee, at a meeting held the day before, had passed a resolution and issued a manifesto condemning the Egyptian Government for permitting His

Majesty's/

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g/1588/28/16.

Majesty's Government to negotiate on a vital Egyptian interest without their participation. Sir Miles Lampson pointed out that this Declaration was the culmination of a persistent campaign in the Wafd press and gave it as his opinion that this development had clearly induced the recent hesitating and wary attitude of the Egyptian Prime Minister. The same afternoon Sir Miles Lampson reported, in his telegram No. 268 to Your Lordship that the Egyptian Prime Minister had now represented to him that the Ward resolution had completely altered the situation, and that he must press for more direct participation by Egypt in the signed settlement at Rome. Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha said that it was essential to him that Egypt should participate on an equal footing as regards both form and substance in the Declarations regarding Lake Tsana and the Suez Canal as well as in the Bon Voisinage Agreement.

5. The Prime Minister's desiderata, in brief, were that (1) the Bon Voisinage Agreement should form an annex to the Protocol and that the Egyptian Government should be mentioned in the Protocol as having been invited to participate in the Bon Voisinage Agreement and in the Declarations regarding Lake Tsana and the Suez Canal.

6. As regards (ii) the Suez Canal, the Prime Minister stated that he would much prefer the Declaration to be tripartite in form, but that in the last resort he would agree to its being communicated in its existing form to the Egyptian Government in separate identic letters by myself and Count Ciano as hitherto proposed. In the latter case,

however/

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however, he would wish that the letters should state that the Declaration was being communicated to the Egyptian Government "as the territorial Power", while the Egyptian Minister in his reply would state that the Egyptian Government took note of the intention of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Italian Government and, as the territorial Power, associated themselves with it.

7. As regards (11/) the Lake Tsana Declaration, Sir Miles Lampson stated that this was the real stumbling block. The Egyptian Prime Minister had represented strongly that it would place him in an impossible position if the Italian Declaration were simply communicated to the Egyptian Government, as proposed. What he required was a direct assurance to Egypt. He wished that a paragraph should be added to the Declaration already contemplated to the effect that the Italian Government declared that they gave to the Egyptian Government as regards the regime of Lake Tsana, assurances identical with those given to the Government of the United Kingdom by the Declaration.

8. The Prime Minister intimated to Sir Miles Lampson that he would be prepared, in the last resort and most unwillingly, for the Egyptian Minister to sign the Bon Voisinage Agreement as originally intended, and to allow the proposed procedure as regards the Suez Canal Declaration to stand (namely, that the Declaration should be simply communicated to the Egyptian Government by His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government). As regards Lake Tsana, however, he could not possibly give way, and, unless his point of view could be met, he would be compelled to ask that there should be no mention of Lake Tsana in the settlement and that this question should be entirely reserved, both for His Majesty's Government/

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Government and for Egypt, for subsequent discussion with the Italian Government.

9. Sir Miles Lampson's telegram containing the foregoing information was received in Rome at 7 o'clock on Good Friday evening, April 15th, less than twenty-four hours before the Agreement was due to be signed. I assumed that it would not in any case be practicable to associate the Egyptian Government directly in the signature of the Protocol as desired by the Egyptian Prime Minister, and in the event this point was not insisted on. As regards the Suez Canal I immediately got into touch with the Italian Government and obtained their agreement to the insertion of a reference to Egypt "as the territorial Power concerned" in the letters to be exchanged between myself, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Minister. This was the procedure eventually adopted. As regards Lake Tsana, from the soundings taken of the Italian Government late on Friday night, I concluded that they would be willing to agree to address a letter to the Egyptian Minister at Rome recording the Declaration made by them to His Majesty's Government and adding a paragraph to the effect that the Italian Government for their part agreed that the Egyptian Government should benefit from the assurances given to His Majesty's Government in the Declaration, with a caveat stating that it was understood that the Declaration did not imply for the Italian Government any new or additional obligation whatsoever beyond those deriving from the Declaration. I ascertained, however, that the Italian Government would require, as a condition, that I should address a letter to the Egyptian Minister  
equally/

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equally recording the Italian Declaration to His Majesty's Government and adding a paragraph to the effect that His Majesty's Government for their part agreed that the Egyptian Government should benefit from the assurances given to His Majesty's Government in the Declaration concerning Lake Tsana.

91588/38/10.

10. In the meanwhile (in your telegram No. 253 which was received in Rome while my consultations with the Italian Government were proceeding) Your Lordship had already telegraphed to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo and had pointed out the impossibility of agreeing to the Egyptian Prime Minister's desiderata regarding the Bon Voisinage Agreement and the association of Egypt with the Protocol, and had suggested, as regards Lake Tsana, that the annex containing the Declaration on this subject should be extracted from those attached to the Protocol, and that a separate tripartite declaration on this subject should be negotiated as soon as might be possible. Your Lordship also observed that, assuming that the Egyptian and Italian Governments agreed in this course, it would seem appropriate that the Italian Government and His Majesty's Government should place on record, in a document to be signed with the other documents on April 16th, a statement to the effect that the matter of Lake Tsana had been amicably discussed and would further be pursued in conjunction with the Egyptian Government in the near future.

11. I had in the meantime consulted Your Lordship's Department by telephone and had acquainted them with the procedure concerning the Lake Tsana Declaration to which I had reason to believe that the Italian Government were prepared/

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prepared to agree. I pointed out that from the Egyptian point of view this was surely much to be preferred, and I suggested that the statement which it was proposed to substitute for the Lake Tsana annex would have the effect of placing the Egyptian Government in a secondary position, which, I understood, was what the Egyptian Prime Minister particularly wished to avoid. I may add that the Italian Government when informed that it might prove necessary to follow the latter procedure, much disliked the idea of it and pointed out that such a form of words would inevitably suggest that a hitch had occurred. I also felt bound to point out to Your Lordship that, quite apart from the foregoing considerations, to eliminate the Lake Tsana Declaration from the main Agreement would necessitate extensive amendments of the text already printed for signature at 6.30 p.m., on Saturday (and indeed time perhaps would not allow of these), while to alter the text of the exchange of notes was still practicable provided that I received a decision by noon the following day. I was orally authorised to proceed along the lines I suggested provided that the matter could be arranged direct with His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo. (My proposals were telegraphed to Your Lordship and to Sir Miles Lampson in my telegram No. 409, despatched in the small hours of Saturday morning).

9/59/38/16

12. I accordingly proceeded to get into touch with His Majesty's Embassy at Cairo by telephone, which proved a difficult task, since, possibly because it was Good Friday, both the Italian and the Egyptian wireless stations were closed for the night. I eventually spoke to the Embassy at 2.00 a.m., on Saturday morning, and learned  
that/

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J1590/38/16

learned that Sir Miles Lampson had by then informed Your Lordship (in his telegram No. 271 which had not yet been received in Rome), that he had already approached the Egyptian Prime Minister in the sense of Your Lordship's instructions recorded in paragraph 9 above and that Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha had accepted Your Lordship's proposal for excluding the Lake Tsana Declaration from the Protocol and substituting a statement that the matter of Lake Tsana would be further pursued in conjunction with the Egyptian Government in the near future. I acquainted the Embassy in Cairo with the procedure to which I hoped to be able to obtain the assent of the Italian Government, and they undertook to consult the Egyptian Prime Minister at the earliest possible moment and to let me know the result if possible before noon.

J1592/34/1

13. At 12.30 p.m., on Saturday I received by telephone Sir Miles Lampson's telegram No. 57 (addressed to Rome) informing me that he had pressed the Egyptian Prime Minister most strongly to accept the procedure I proposed regarding Lake Tsana, but that His Excellency found the suggested wording unsatisfactory. Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha desired the omission of the passage in the Italian note stating that the Declaration did not imply for Italy any new or additional obligation; he further required that the first paragraph of the Italian and British notes should state that "the assurances given to His Majesty's Government in the above-mentioned Declaration concerning Lake Tsana shall apply equally to the Egyptian Government."

14. I immediately (at lunch time on Saturday) put these suggestions to the Italian Government who happily accepted/

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accepted them. The draft exchange of notes was amended accordingly, and it was possible to reprint the signature copies in time for them to be signed with the other documents at half-past six as arranged.

14. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and Cairo.

I have the honour to be,

with great truth and respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,

Park

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J	J 1863
	359 7 MAY 1938

Registry Number } J 1863/38/16. FROM Squadron-Leader Blackford (Air Ministry) to Mr. J.W. Nicholls. No. S 44632 Secret. Dated May, 1938. Received in Registry } 7th May, 1938 J : Egypt and Sudan.	Proposed agreement between Italy and Egypt. Refers to Foreign Office telegram to Cairo No. 260 of 23rd April 1938 (J 1670/38/16), which establishes principles with which the Air Ministry are in full agreement. Air Ministry would much prefer the agreement to take the "bon-voisinage" form originally proposed; but if the Egyptians adhere to the idea of a non-aggression pact, would like to insist upon a clause referring to Egypt's obligations under the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty.
---	---

Last Paper. (J 1840) J 1859 References.	(Minutes.) The A.M. views are reasonable & must be borne in mind when we see what sort of a draft Bedawi Pasha produces.
---	---

(Print.) (How disposed of.) Y. A. Cairo. No 582 May 12.	Meanwhile a copy of this letter might go to Cairo ref. P.O. tel. 279 (J 1840). Mr Beckett Southern Dept } re London 10/5 Yes, although I am sure that Sir M. Lampson is as alive as ourselves to the considerations advanced in this letter. - v. w.
--	--

(Action completed.) 26.5.38	(Index.) 1147
Next Paper. (J 1959) J 1960	

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S. 44632

SECRET.

*N. C. Bruntwich*  
*copy*  
*5/12*

AIR MINISTRY,

ADASTRAL HOUSE,

KINGSWAY, W.C.2.

360

May, 1938.

J 1863

7 MAY 1938

*Dear Nicholls,*

I promised to let you have the ~~Air Ministry's~~ observations upon the proposed agreement between Italy and Egypt.

Your telegram No. 260 to Sir M. Lampson on 23rd April establishes principles with which the Air Ministry are in full agreement. It is essential from the air point of view that the Treaty of Alliance with Egypt shall not be prejudiced by any pact between Egypt and Italy which might make it possible for Egypt to delay or refuse the provision of the air facilities we are entitled to expect under the Alliance in event of a war with Italy. For this reason, the Air Ministry would much prefer to see the proposed agreement take the "bon-voisinage" form originally proposed by the Egyptians themselves.

If, however, the Egyptians adhere to the idea of a non-aggression pact, it would appear of great importance to be quite sure that the prior claims of the Anglo-Egyptian Alliance are duly recognised, and we should like to insist, if possible, upon the inclusion in any such pact of a clause to the effect that nothing in the pact shall in any way prejudice Egypt's obligations under her alliance with us.

*Yours sincerely*  
*D. Blackford*

J.W. Nicholls, Esq.,  
Foreign Office,  
Downing Street,  
S.W.1.

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18	J	J 1907 361 10 MAY 1938

Registry } J 1907/38/16 Number } FROM Lord Perth (Rome) No. 439 (265/13/38) Dated 6th May 1938 Received 10th May in Registry } 1938 J: Egypt and Sudan	<b>Anglo-Italian Agreement: Suez Canal declaration.</b> Gives a summary of an article by Signor Giovanni Selvi published in the "Stampa" of 3rd May 1938, emphasizing the necessity from the Italian point of view of the declaration reaffirming the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 which formed part of the Anglo-Italian Agreement. (Copy sent to Cairo).
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<b>Last Paper.</b> 91863	(Minutes.)
<b>References.</b>	This despatch consists of an unimpaired translation of a rather woolly article in "Stampa" about the Suez Canal declaration in the Anglo-Italian Agreement. There is nothing in the article, I think, to which we need take exception.
(Print.)	
(How disposed of.) F.H. Admty. May 14	1 Copy to Admiralty 1 Wilson Yarny 12/5

(Action completed.) SP. 14.5.38	(Index) 6/5
<b>Next Paper.</b> 91459	The language of this despatch is in places not quite up to standard. 12/5 12/14.

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No. 439  
(265/13/38)

J 1907  
10 MAY 1938

British Embassy, 362

Rome.

6th May, 1938.

My Lord,

I have the honour to report that the "Stampa" of May 3rd published an article by Signor Giovanni Selvi emphasizing the necessity from the Italian standpoint of the declaration reaffirming the Constantinople Convention of 1888 which formed part of the Anglo-Italian Agreement. The writer affirmed that freedom of transit through the Canal had become for Italy a formidable and indeed a vital interest after the conquest of the Ethiopian Empire. The Red Sea was to-day for Italy a continuation of the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal. In this Canal a stronger and concrete identity of interests had replaced as between England and Italy a source of diffidence and divergence. An explicit clarification as regards the Constantinople Convention was, therefore, indispensable to set minds at rest as to the interpretation and the more or less extensive interpretation to be given to the clauses relating to the Convention inserted in the peace treaties and to the clauses relating to the Suez Canal inserted in the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of August 1936. Signor Selvi stated that this "particularly delicate" point in Anglo-Italian relations had been "exhaustively" clarified in Declaration number 8 of the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

2. Signor Selvi quoted the principal articles of the/

The Right Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.G.,  
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,

etc., etc., etc.,

FOREIGN OFFICE.

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the Suez Canal Convention, underlining the fact that, while the control of the neutrality of the Canal was international, the adoption of measures against its violation was entrusted under Article 9 to the Egyptian Government and, in case the Egyptian Government should not have sufficient means at its disposal, <sup>to</sup> the Imperial Ottoman Government. The neutrality of the Canal had been effectively maintained in the course of the Spanish-American, Russo-Japanese and Italo-Turkish wars. The whirlwind of the world war had, however, disconnected the Convention rendering it unfit to stand so violent a shock. But if a new historical reality had modified its letter and, in part, its substance, it had remained unchanged in its essence, and, therefore, it had been particularly useful, and to the interest not only of Italy, to have re-affirmed the validity of the Convention, dispelling those doubts which arose when during the Italo-Ethiopian conflict the Convention was held by some people to be incompatible with certain provisions of the League of Nations Covenant.

3. Two facts in particular had intervened to modify and affect the Convention: the insertion of a clause in the Versailles and other peace treaties and the military clauses of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of alliance. It became necessary by means of an affirmation of principle, adaptable to all the developments of the new historical situation, to eliminate the legitimate doubts that those clauses might impair the effective neutrality of the Canal, as guaranteed by the Constantinople Convention.

4. <sup>There is</sup> In force of Article 152 of the Treaty of Versailles, which was repeated in the subsequent peace treaties, Germany agreed/

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agreed to the transference to the British Government of the powers conferred on the Sultan by the Constantinople Convention. This was in reality a blank cheque, and the extent of the pledge thereby undertaken was made manifest only in the military clauses of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty.

5. The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was a very able instrument perfectly adherent to the traditional realism of British policy. Egypt had been granted independence, but by a reciprocal understanding there were embodied in the treaty of alliance guarantees of a military character with regard to the Suez Canal, which was thus entrusted to Great Britain's full and absolute protection. It was common knowledge that the most fiery section of the Egyptian Nationalists declared its opposition to this form of military subjection, which rendered independence too similar to a form of protectorate, even if formally the military occupation was stated to be only provisional. <sup>sovereign</sup> Egypt's right to dispose of her own territory in the form which it regarded as most useful in her own interest was beyond discussion, but the question inevitably arose whether Egypt's right to dispose of the Suez Canal was equally indisputable "and we "could not remain indifferent to agreements which might throw "the least doubt on the full respect for the free use of the "Canal, guaranteed in all times and to all powers, as laid "down in the preamble of the Convention."

6. It was perfectly natural for Italy to take into account the essential importance which the question of the Suez Canal had for Great Britain; but England had understood that a question of so vast and important international interest could not be measured "only with the measure of "the British Commonwealth of Nations", and could not be settled only by an agreement between two nations, since the/

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the declaration contained in Article 8 of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty that the Suez Canal was an integral part of Egyptian territory could not be held to authorize the "hegemonic use" of the Canal, regardless of the spirit and substance of the Constantinople Convention, which gave to this waterway an extra-territorial character. The Suez Canal was not a canal, excavated in a territory, but a section of sea, however, narrow, which connected the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

7. The other Power territorially concerned was also, therefore, necessarily asked to confirm the guarantees laid down in the Constantinople Convention, "which have not been, "and cannot be, violated by such interpretations as, in point "of law and of fact, may be given to the military clauses of "the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance."

8. This Treaty had been concluded in the most acute stage of the Anglo-Italian tension and under the alarmist impression caused by the rapid and victorious conquest of Ethiopia, which changed the situation between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The numerous assurances given by the Duce were forgotten. It often happened that, owing to an excessively diffident defence of one's own interests, a war mentality was created and war preparations were made when those interests might have found in an honest and realistic understanding a firm and certain guarantee, the more certain as it was based upon the recognition of parity and upon principles of peace with justice. This was what the Easter Agreements had done. By recognizing that the Constantinople Convention was still in force, they had settled one of the "neuralgic points" of the tension between Italy and

England/

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England , between two Empires which had, on the contrary, numerous and profound reasons for advantageous and friendly accords.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo.

I have the honour to be,

with great truth and respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,

Penn

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No.545.  
(7/33/38)  
SECRET.

J20/17

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
CAIRO, 4  
12th May, 1938.

My Lord,

[With reference to your despatch No.529 Secret of the 28th April,] I have the honour to report that since the Anglo-Italian negotiations began to make real progress there has been a cessation of anti-British propaganda in the Bari Radio, the local Italian press and the Agence d'Egypte et d'Orient, except on the subject of Palestine, regarding which anti-British items still occur, but in a more moderate form.

2. We have latterly received very few reports of any activities on the part of Colonel Campi and he appears to be keeping quiet for the moment.

3. Commendatore Dadone, according to reports which we have received has periodical interviews with certain students, mainly Tripolitan, in the Azhar, but it is quite possible that he is using them for pro-Italian rather than anti-British propaganda purposes.

4. Although it is possible that the Italians have ceased making open anti-British propaganda and may still be indulging in more surreptitious forms, up to date we have no evidence to show that this is the case.

5. As regards German propaganda, we have received reports to the effect that the present German policy is to refrain from political

/propaganda

The Right Honourable  
Viscount Halifax,  
K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
&c., &c., &c.,

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propaganda in Egypt and to limit itself to commercial activity. Apparently the German idea was that, as regards political propaganda, Egypt should be left to the Italians. Mr. Tietz, who has held the dubious position of Director of the Deutsche Nachrichten Büro and of Attaché at the German Legation, is shortly to be replaced by another man who will only be Director of the Deutsche Nachrichten Büro. Mr. Tietz told Mr. Napier that there was little scope for political propaganda in the Eastern Mediterranean and that he himself hoped eventually to be transferred to Bucharest which would become a centre of Deutsche Nachrichten Büro activities in the Balkans.

6. The activities of Italian and German agents will continue to be closely watched.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant.



AMBASSADOR.



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J

J 2246

7 JUN 1938

Registry } J 2246/38/16  
Number }  
FROM Sir M. Lampson  
(Cairo)

No. 595  
(327/201/38)  
Dated 21st May 1938  
Received } 7th June  
in Registry } 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan

Egyptian interest in the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

Transmits copies of official report of proceedings of Chamber of Deputies on 18th May, recording debate on subject of Anglo-Italian Agreement and its relevance to Egypt. Encloses also copies of the proceedings as published in "Egyptian Gazette" of 19th May. Gives a summary of the debate. A vote of non-confidence in the Government was rejected by a large majority, only the Nahas Wafdists voting in favour of the motion.

## Last Paper.

J2144

## References.

(Print)  
15/6  
Egypt (without incl.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

The rather lengthy debate is well summarised in the covering despatch. As regards Ahmed Maher Pasha's statement (para. 5) that the Sudan article of the Treaty was a "calamity", it would be interesting to know how he reconciles this view with the fact that he signed the Treaty.

Tom Pirk

14/6

Mr Lambert  
Soudan  
14/6

Presumably he considered that it would be a worse calamity if the Treaty was not concluded and therefore signed it.

H. Cameron  
14/VI.

L. H. Mac

(Action completed.)

SP  
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(Index.)

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## Next Paper.

J2294

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No. 595.  
(327/201/38)

J 2246  
7 JUN 1938

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
CAIRO. 10  
21st May 1938.

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the official report of the proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies of Wednesday, 18th May, which records an interesting debate on the subject of the Anglo-Italian Agreement and its relevance to Egypt. I also enclose a copy of the proceedings as published in the "Egyptian Gazette" of May 19th.

2. The Debate took place on an interpellation moved by a Wafdist Deputy Abdul Hamid Abdul Hakk, who argued on the usual lines that Egypt had not been properly consulted during these negotiations and that the recognition of Italian sovereignty in Ethiopia should only have been accorded in exchange for a recognition of Egypt's religious interests in that country.

3. The Prime Minister replied himself to this interpellation and strongly defended the agreement, deprecating what he described as a false accusation that the Government had not insisted on being kept properly informed whilst the negotiations were taking place. He showed how Egypt's rights had been fully guaranteed in respect of the Suez Canal and Lake Tsana and explained the proposal for a joint Commission to settle the frontier between the Sudan and Ethiopia. He concluded by referring to the proposal for a bon voisinage agreement between Egypt and Italy.

4. Dr. Ahmed Maher, the leader of the Opposition, criticised the Government for not having taken a sufficiently active part in the conversations regarding Egypt's relations

The Right Honourable  
Viscount Halifax, K.G.,  
P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
&c., &c., &c.

/with

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with Abyssinia, but was generally congratulatory to the Government for the part it had played in the negotiations.

5. Referring, however, to Egyptian interests in the Sudan, Dr. Ahmed Maher described Article 11 of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty as "a calamity" and emphasised the fact that the question of Egypt's sovereignty in the Sudan was thereunder still reserved and that it was not recognised by the British. He postulated that owing to this lack of recognition it might be possible for Italy to say that Egypt had no particular right to discuss the Sudan-Ethiopian frontier delimitation.

6. The debate was wound up by the Prime Minister who thanked Dr. Ahmed Maher for his complimentary references to the Government and assured him that in any coming negotiations Egyptian interests in Abyssinia would be fully defended. He did not specifically reply to the question of sovereignty in the Sudan raised by Dr. Ahmed Maher, considering no doubt, that it had been fully answered by his previous statement that the delimitation of the frontier was fundamentally an administrative matter which was fully provided for under the present Condominium Agreement providing for the joint participation of Great Britain and Egypt in the Government of the Sudan.

7. A vote of non-confidence in the Government was put to the vote and rejected by a large majority, only the Nahas Wafdists voting in favour of the motion.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant.

  
AMBASSADOR.

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C H A M B R E   D E S   D E P U T E S

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Septième Législature - Première Session

-----  
Septième séance, le Mercredi 12 Mai 1938

-----  
La séance est ouverte à 6 heures 10 de l'après-midi, sous la présidence de l'honorable Dr MOHAMED BAHI ED DINE BARAKAT PACHA.

REMANIEMENT DU MINISTERE  
-----

Le PRESIDENT communique à la Chambre le décret royal portant remaniement du Ministère :

Nous, FAROUK 1er, Roi d'Egypte,

Vu le Décret du 27 Avril 1938 portant constitution du ministère;

Sur la proposition du Président de Notre Conseil des Ministres;

DECRETONS :

Article Premier

La démission d'Ismail Sedky Pacha, Ministre des Finances, est acceptée;

Mohamed Mahmoud Pacha, Ministre de l'Intérieur, est nommé Ministre des Finances;

Ahmed Loutfy El Sayed Pacha, Ministre d'Etat, est nommé Ministre de l'Intérieur.

Art. 2.

Le Président de Notre Conseil des Ministres est chargé de l'exécution du présent décret.

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Fait au Palais d'Abdine, le 18 Rabi Arral 1357 (18 Mai 1938).

FAROUK.

Par le Roi  
Le Président du Conseil  
des Ministres

MOHAMED MAHMOUD.

#### LE PRESIDENT DU SENAT

Le PRESIDENT communique à la Chambre une lettre de l'honorable Mohamed Mahmoud Khalil <sup>Rey</sup> annonçant sa nomination aux hautes fonctions de Président du Sénat.

#### PROJETS DE LOIS

La Chambre renvoie à la Commission du Commerce et de l'Industrie les projets de lois suivants déposés par le Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie :

- 1) projet de loi relatif aux marques de fabrique,
- 2) projet de loi relatif aux poids et mesures,
- 3) projet de loi réglementant l'industrie et le commerce du savon.

#### QUESTIONS

Suppression du crédit affecté à la  
caisse de prévoyance des avocats.  
dans le projet du budget 1938-39

L'honorable MAHMOUD SOLIMAN GHANNAM demande au Président du Conseil s'il est vrai, comme l'ont rapporté certains journaux, que le Conseil des Ministres a décidé de supprimer du projet du budget de 1938-1939 le crédit de L.E.10.000 destiné à la caisse de prévoyance des avocats.

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AHMED KHALCHARA PACHA, Ministre de la Justice. - Le Ministère de la Justice examine actuellement le projet de loi relatif au Barreau national. Il espère pouvoir le présenter à la Chambre au cours de la présente session. Une des questions sur lesquelles porte l'examen est celle de la création d'une caisse de retraite pour les avocats et du montant de la contribution du gouvernement à cette caisse. Il est naturel que le gouvernement ne fixe le montant de sa participation qu'après avoir terminé cet examen.

D'autre part, le ministère a reçu diverses demandes émanant d'avocats près les Tribunaux Mixtes, dont certaines tendent à ce qu'une subvention soit accordée à leur caisse de retraite, en raison de la situation nouvelle découlant pour eux de la Convention de Montreux. Dans ces conditions, le ministère doit examiner toutes ces questions connexes avant de prendre une décision à leur sujet, dans les limites des possibilités budgétaires. Il serait donc prématuré d'inscrire au budget de cette année un crédit de dix mille livres à titre de subvention à la caisse de retraite des avocats du Barreau national.

Les adjudications des  
Chemins de fer de l'Etat

L'honorable ABDALLAH FIKRI ABAZA demande au Ministre des Communications s'il n'est pas temps de supprimer dans les adjudications des Chemins de fer de l'Etat la condition imposant aux soumissionnaires d'accompagner leurs offres d'un cautionnement et d'échantillons.

HILMI ISSA PACHA, Ministre des Communications. - Toutes les adjudications des Chemins de fer sont libres; elles sont ouvertes à quiconque veut y prendre part, à moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'articles touchant la sécurité du public ou des ouvriers dans les ateliers. Dans ce cas, l'intérêt général exige qu'ils soient fournis par des usines présentant des garanties et jouissant d'une

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renommée mondiale.

Toutefois, cette restriction ne s'applique pas aux produits de l'industrie égyptienne. Pour les produits locaux, les intéressés peuvent prendre part aux deux catégories d'adjudications de l'Administration des Chemins de fer.

L'administration examine de temps à autre les listes des articles inscrits et elle en élimine les sociétés qui n'ont pas présenté d'offres au cours des dix dernières années, afin d'ouvrir le champ devant les sociétés et les maisons de commerce nouvelles ainsi que celles qui se sentent à même de demander l'inscription de leurs noms dans la liste de l'industrie à laquelle elles appartiennent. Il y a encore de la place pour les sociétés qui voudraient inscrire leurs noms, car en fait, ces listes n'ont pas encore atteint le nombre de maisons fixé pour chacune d'elles.

#### INTERPELLATION

##### Les négociations anglo-italiennes au sujet des frontières égyptiennes et du canal de Suez

La Chambre passe à la discussion de l'interpellation de l'honorable ABDEL HAMID ABDEL HAK relative aux négociations anglo-italiennes au sujet des frontières égyptiennes et du Canal de Suez.

L'honorable ABDEL HAMID ABDEL HAK développe son interpellation, insistant sur la gravité et l'importance de la question. Il dit qu'elle ne concerne pas un parti plutôt qu'un autre, mais qu'elle intéresse tout le monde. Il déclare qu'il fera abstraction de toute considération de parti; il parlera en patriote sincère dans la citation des faits.

Il explique comment, au cours des dernières années, les relations entre l'Angleterre et l'Italie se sont tendues, et comment le gouvernement britannique a dernièrement estimé utile d'adopter

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une politique de conciliation avec l'Italie et de régler les différends surgis entre les deux pays. Il ajoute que le règlement de ces différends ne pouvait se faire que si l'accord entre les deux pays portait sur des questions purement égyptiennes, — bien qu'intéressant les intérêts de l'Angleterre et l'Italie, — comme le Canal de Suez, les frontières occidentales de l'Egypte, les frontières entre le Soudan et l'Ethiopie et le lac Tana. Aussi, les Egyptiens s'attendaient-ils, conformément au traité à voir l'Angleterre inviter l'Egypte à participer aux négociations engagées entre elle et l'Italie. Mais ces négociations ont eu lieu sans que l'Egypte y prit part. Elle ne savait rien à leur sujet, sauf les nouvelles que lui apportaient les télégrammes ou ce que l'Ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne daignait lui communiquer en vue de prendre l'avis du Gouvernement Egyptien; cet avis était ensuite transmis au Foreign Office, pour être communiqué à Lord Perth, ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne à Rome. C'est ce dernier qui négociait pour nous. Dans ces conditions, le gouvernement égyptien a commis un grand crime en laissant à une Puissance étrangère le soin de négocier les intérêts extérieurs du pays.

L'honorable député déclare qu'il prouvera à la Chambre les deux points suivants :

1) que les négociations dont il s'agit ont eu lieu sans la participation de notre pays et que le rôle joué par l'Egypte a été négatif;

2) que ces négociations ont porté sur des questions essentiellement égyptiennes; Il est vrai que les Anglais pouvaient avoir le droit de participer à certaines de ces questions, mais les autres étaient de la compétence exclusive de l'Egypte qui aurait dû les traiter seule; en fait, c'est l'Angleterre qui les a traitées toute seule.

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Le premier point est nettement établi par le Protocole qui dit que les négociations ont lieu entre les représentants des gouvernements britannique et italien. Pourtant, les questions sur lesquelles il porte sont pour la plupart des questions égyptiennes.

Quant au deuxième point, l'orateur dit que l'accord a été fait sur huit questions dont quatre sont égyptiennes. De ces dernières, deux ont nettement ce caractère : celles se rapportant au lac Tana et au Canal de Suez. Pour les deux autres, l'une concerne la non indépendance de l'Éthiopie et l'autre est relative à l'engagement pris par les deux Puissances de se communiquer mutuellement les mouvements des troupes. L'Angleterre n'a daigné informer l'Égypte que de l'accord conclu au sujet des deux premières questions.

Le seul document dans lequel est cité le nom de l'Égypte est celui relatif au bon voisinage. Le gouvernement égyptien l'a approuvé, comme suite de l'accord conclu entre l'Angleterre et l'Italie. Pour compléter cet accord, il était nécessaire de conclure un traité de bon voisinage entre le Soudan et l'Éthiopie; c'est pourquoi l'Angleterre a invité l'Égypte à signer ce traité, pour se conformer aux dispositions du traité d'amitié et d'alliance qui les lient. Dans ce document, l'Égypte reconnaît la disposition contenue dans le Protocole, par laquelle le gouvernement britannique s'engage envers le gouvernement italien à engager immédiatement des négociations en vue d'arriver à un accord définitif au sujet des frontières entre le Soudan et l'Éthiopie. Or, en vertu des dispositions du traité d'amitié et d'alliance, l'Angleterre ne possède pas ce droit.

L'honorable député critique ensuite les télégrammes échangés entre l'Angleterre et l'Italie après la conclusion de l'accord,

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et dans lesquels il est dit que le ministre d'Egypte à Rome sera invité à signer le traité. En aucun cas, une telle formule ne saurait être acceptée.

Il explique que seul celui qui possède le droit de propriété et de souveraineté sur un pays peut parler de 'ses frontières ou conclure un accord pour leur fixation. Or, conformément à l'article 11 du traité d'amitié et d'alliance, le droit de l'Angleterre au Soudan est limité à sa participation à l'administration; la question de souveraineté a été réservée à des négociations futures. Par suite, l'accord conclu entre l'Angleterre et l'Egypte quant à la fixation définitive des frontières entre le Soudan et l'Ethiopie, — accord qui pourrait entraîner la modification de ces frontières, — est en contradiction avec les dispositions du traité qui interdisent à l'Angleterre d'exercer un acte de souveraineté sur le Soudan.

L'orateur passe ensuite à la discussion d'un des documents de l'accord conclu entre l'Angleterre et l'Italie, relativement à l'engagement pris par chacune des deux Puissances de communiquer à l'autre en janvier de chaque année les renseignements sur la répartition de ses troupes d'abord dans ses colonies, ensuite dans les pays situés entre le 20ème degré de longitude et le 7ème degré de latitude. Il est dit dans le résumé officiel de ce document que ces pays comprennent l'Egypte. Or, l'Egypte n'est pas une colonie et l'armée anglaise ne s'y trouve que pour collaborer avec l'Egypte dans la défense du Canal. L'Angleterre ne devait donc pas donner un tel engagement en ce qui concerne ses troupes en Egypte, avant d'avoir consulté au préalable le gouvernement égyptien. Il est regrettable qu'elle se soit ainsi comportée envers l'Egypte, comme s'il s'agissait d'une colonie.

L'honorable député fait ensuite allusion aux documents relatifs à l'engagement pris par l'Italie de réduire ses troupes en

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Lybie. Bien qu'il s'agisse là, dit-il, d'une question intéressant l'Egypte, puisqu'elle se rapporte à ses frontières occidentales, l'Angleterre en a décidé seule, comme s'il s'agissait de ses frontières et comme si elle était responsable de la protection et de la défense de l'Egypte. Le Gouvernement Egyptien a ainsi aliéné les droits de l'Egypte en laissant à l'Angleterre le soin de traiter en son nom, sans protester et sans participer aux négociations.

Parlant de l'accord d'après lequel l'Angleterre prêterait son aide à l'Italie pour parachever la conquête de l'Abyssinie, et de l'accord de bon voisinage à conclure entre l'Egypte et l'Abyssinie, l'orateur déclare que le premier est préjudiciable pour l'Egypte et avantageux pour l'Angleterre et l'Italie. Après avoir exposé les liens historiques et religieux qui relient l'Egypte à l'Abyssinie, et stigmatisé les agissements des autorités italiennes contre l'Evêque d'Abyssinie, il blâme le gouvernement d'avoir conclu cet accord sans compensation; il n'a pas sauvegardé les droits de l'Egypte et n'a pas réglé la question de l'Eglise Copte, alors que les Anglais ont sauvegardé les intérêts de leurs missionnaires religieux dans ce pays.

L'honorable député termine en déclarant que les faits qu'il vient d'exposer démontrent que le gouvernement a gravement aliéné les droits de l'Egypte et qu'il a laissé à l'Angleterre le soin de régler ses questions extérieures, ce qui est en contradiction avec notre indépendance et les dispositions du traité anglo-egyptien.

MOHAMED MAHMOUD PACHA, Président du Conseil des Ministres.-

Honorables députés, Je n'ai pas besoin, après la déclaration que j'ai eu l'honneur de faire à cette honorable Assemblée, de confirmer le mal fondé de l'accusation portée contre le ministère et d'après laquelle il se serait contenté de recevoir une simple communication des questions que les gouvernements britannique et italien ont considéré comme intéressant l'Egypte. Il faut savoir que

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les négociations ne se sont pas bornées à la discussion des questions qui touchent à l'Egypte; elles ont englobé plusieurs autres intéressant les deux gouvernements, à un moment où le maintien de la paix générale, exigeait l'existence d'une atmosphère de cordialité et de bonne entente entre les deux pays. En tout cas, le gouvernement égyptien a été informé de toutes les questions touchant la Méditerranée, l'Extrême-Orient et l'Afrique. En ce qui concerne les questions intéressant l'Egypte particulièrement les déclarations relatives au Lac Tana et au Canal de Suez, tout ce qui a eu lieu au début a consisté en une réitération de la part du gouvernement italien des déclarations qu'il avait déjà faites au gouvernement britannique au sujet de la première question, et en une réaffirmation de la part des deux gouvernements de leur résolution de respecter la convention relative à la liberté de navigation dans le Canal de Suez. Bien que la déclaration se rapportant au Lac Tana ait été communiquée au Cabinet Nahas Pacha à la date du 4 Janvier 1937, nous n'avons trouvé dans les archives de la Présidence aucun document établissant que pareille communication ait été faite; naturellement nous n'avons trouvé non plus aucune trace d'une démarche ou d'un acte dans ce sens (Applaudissements).

Le ministère actuel a estimé qu'il n'était pas conforme à l'intérêt de l'Egypte ni à sa dignité de se contenter de cette réitération de la déclaration faite à la Grande-Bretagne, sans en recevoir une analogue. Aussi, a-t-il engagé des pourparlers avec les deux gouvernements et obtenu d'eux une déclaration spéciale qu'il était nécessaire de séparer du Protocole qu'ils avaient signé au sujet des questions les concernant. Il a également estimé que la déclaration réaffirmant le respect de la convention internationale sur le Canal de Suez devait être adressée à l'Egypte en tant qu'elle possède la souveraineté sur le Canal. La participation du Gouvernement Egyptien à ces négociations a eu pour résul-

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tat qu'une communication lui a été adressée en cette qualité, et dans ce sens. C'est là la preuve la plus éloquente que les droits de l'Egypte dans les questions qui la touchent sont respectés.

Il est vraiment regrettable que l'auteur de l'interpellation ait eu recours à une interprétation aussi peu conforme à la réalité en ce qui concerne la participation de l'Egypte avec l'Angleterre dans les négociations relatives aux frontières entre le Soudan et l'Ethiopie. Rien n'est plus préjudiciable pour la patrie que ces fausses allégations qui sont de nature à porter atteinte aux droits du pays et à affaiblir sa position. Car on pourrait un jour se prévaloir de ces déclarations (Vifs applaudissements prolongés). Il n'est pas permis de faire planer le moindre doute en pareille matière; il est à plus forte raison inadmissible que l'auteur de ces allégations les fasse sur un ton aussi affirmatif dans le seul but de permettre de pirter des accusations contre le ministère.

On ne saurait prétendre que l'attitude du gouvernement a en quelque sorte tranché la question de souveraineté qui avait été réservée par l'article 11 du traité d'alliance entre l'Egypte et l'Angleterre. Car la renonciation à un droit du Gouvernement Egyptien ne saurait résulter de déductions ni de présomptions; d'autre part, il n'est pas logique après que les deux parties ont convenu de réserver la question de souveraineté, que cette question soit ensuite réglée dans des conditions de vassalité, dans un accord au sujet des frontières.

L'auteur de l'interpellation ignore peut-être que la question des frontières entre le Soudan et l'Abyssinie fait l'objet d'un accord conclu en 1902 entre le Gouvernement Britannique seul et l'Empereur d'Ethiopie. D'autre part, le ministère actuel ne trouve pas que l'acte fait par le Grande-Bretagne d'engager isolement et à l'exclusion de l'Egypte des conversations au sujet du Soudan contienne un indice quelconque pouvant signifier que la question

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de la souveraineté sur le Soudan a été tranchée ou que l'Angleterre se soit accaparée le droit de la régler. Le ministère continue à considérer et proclame que cette question est toujours réservée et que la participation de la Grande-Bretagne avec l'Egypte dans les négociations au sujet des frontières ne constitue pas plus qu'une participation à l'administration, car les questions de frontières, comme tous les autres actes de gouvernement, sont non seulement des questions de souveraineté, mais aussi d'administration. En outre, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que les questions de frontières ont d'habitude un caractère d'urgence; elles peuvent souffrir de retard et ne sauraient naturellement être ajournées jusqu'à ce<sup>que</sup> la Grande-Bretagne et l'Egypte arrivent à un accord au sujet de la souveraineté sur le Soudan.

Je croyais que dans l'intérêt du pays, on éviterait tantôt d'accuser le ministère de placer l'Egypte dans la position d'un pays sous protectorat, tantôt de la placer dans la position d'une colonie, à moins que l'on ne veuille interpréter dans ce sens la présence d'une garnison anglaise (Applaudissements).

L'accord conclu relativement à l'échange des renseignements sur la répartition des forces militaires, — accord qui constitue une restriction importante à la liberté des deux gouvernements, dans l'intérêt de la paix, — exige fatalement en raison même de la présence des troupes britanniques en Egypte, de les considérer comme une des forces au sujet desquelles l'échange des renseignements aura lieu.

C'est dénaturer les faits que de prétendre que la note relative à cette question ou le résumé qui en a été publié laissent comprendre que l'Egypte est une colonie. Les deux documents dont il s'agit sont entre vos mains, et il vous est donc aisé de vous rendre compte par vous-mêmes de la réalité. Il n'était pas possible,

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sans porter atteinte à la dignité de l'Egypte, de définir autrement l'emplacement des forces en question autrement que par les degrés de longitude et de latitude.

En ce qui concerne les rapports de voisinage entre l'Egypte et l'Italie sur les frontières de la Lybie, je n'ai pas besoin de dire que cette question fera l'objet de pourparlers entre les deux pays. Il en sera de même pour tout ce qui touche les intérêts de l'Egypte en Abyssinie. Enfin, les intérêts du Soudan feront également l'objet de négociations entre l'Egypte, la Grande-Bretagne et l'Italie.

Il est inexact, pour ne pas dire plus, de prétendre que l'accord de bon voisinage signé par l'Egypte avec la Grande-Bretagne et l'Italie constitue une reconnaissance de la part de l'Egypte de l'annexion de l'Ethiopie sans aucune compensation.

L'auteur de l'interpellation sait pertinemment que la question éthiopienne devait être discutée à la session de la Société des Nations qui s'est tenue dernièrement à Genève. De plus, il n'ignore pas que tout ce qui se rapporte aux intérêts de l'Egypte en Ethiopie fera l'objet de négociations spéciales entre l'Egypte et l'Italie.

Je voudrais attirer l'attention sur le fait qu'il existe des usages et des conventions dont il faut tenir compte lorsqu'il s'agit de questions de politique extérieure. Les passions et les rivalités de partis doivent être mises de côté, pour ne pas susciter au gouvernement des difficultés dans ses rapports extérieurs. Il ne faudrait pas perdre de vue toutes ces considérations au cours des débats qui se déroulent au sein de cette honorable assemblée, car il faut que l'intérêt du pays passe avant celui des personnes et des partis.

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L'honorable MOHAMED FIKRI ABIZA déclare que les discussions qui viennent de se dérouler confirment l'opinion du Parti Nationaliste au sujet du traité anglo-égyptien. Ce parti estimait en effet que le traité était désavantageux pour l'Egypte. Or, ses désavantages se révèlent de jour en jour plus clairement.

Parlant de la nature des accords de Rome et de la question de savoir s'il y a lieu de prendre l'avis du Parlement à leur sujet ou de se borner à <sup>les</sup> lui communiquer simplement, l'orateur pense qu'il est nécessaire de consulter à ce sujet le Parlement, car il s'agit en l'espèce d'accords touchant aux droits de l'Egypte et à sa souveraineté. En effet, ils se rapportent à la délimitation des frontières entre l'Egypte et l'Ethiopie et pourraient occasionner des frais au Trésor. En outre, ils confirment certains engagements et déclarations concernant le Lac Tana et qui n'étaient pas bien définis. Ces déclarations ont eu lieu pour la première fois, le 3 avril 1936, c'est à dire avant la conclusion du Traité anglo-égyptien.

Pour toutes ces considérations, l'honorable député est d'avis d'ajourner l'interpellation et de renvoyer la question à la Commission des Questions Constitutionnelles, à l'effet de savoir si les accords dont il s'agit doivent être soumis au Parlement, afin qu'il puisse formuler son avis à leur sujet, ou s'il suffit de les lui communiquer simplement.

L'honorable MAMDOUH RIAZ dit que cette question se résume en deux points :

1) que des négociations ont eu lieu entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Italie, pour liquider les questions pendantes entre elles. Or, il n'y a pas de doute que ce droit appartient à ces deux Puissances, tant qu'il est exercé dans le cadre du Droit International et qu'il respecte les droits des tiers;

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2) que parmi les questions sur lesquelles ont porté ces négociations, il existe des questions qui intéressent l'Egypte.

Quant à dire que l'Egypte n'a pas été invitée à participer aux négociations relatives à ces dernières questions, c'est là une allégation inadmissible, car il résulte de la déclaration du Président du Conseil des Ministres et de l'examen des documents mêmes que l'Egypte a pris part à ces négociations dans des conditions qui sauvegardaient sa dignité et sa souveraineté.

En outre, les résultats auxquels ont abouti ces accords n'aliènent en rien les droits de l'Egypte ni ses intérêts vitaux.

En effet, l'accord sur le Lac Tana <sup>atteinte aux droits de</sup> contient une déclaration qui, loin de porter atteinte à l'Egypte, la considère au contraire comme partie contractante et lui reconnaît une qualité qui ne lui était pas reconnue dans la première déclaration de 1936. Il confirme également les droits qui lui avaient été réservés dans les précédents accords auxquels l'Egypte n'avait pas participé.

En ce qui concerne l'accord concernant le Canal de Suez, il ne contient aucun nouvel arrangement; il ne fait que confirmer la Convention de Constantinople de 1888, qui n'a pas cessé d'être en vigueur.

Quant à l'accord de bon voisinage, il prévoit des négociations futures pour examiner les détails des questions en suspens au sujet des frontières entre l'Afrique Orientale Italienne et le Soudan.

L'orateur fait remarquer qu'il n'y a là rien qui soit de nature à léser les intérêts de l'Egypte, vu qu'elle se réserve tous les droits pour les négociations futures. Dans la question de la limitation des frontières, on doit distinguer entre l'établissement de nouvelles frontières et la limitation des frontières actuelles; en d'autres termes, il faut que les documents de propriété soient conformes à la nature des frontières. C'est d'ailleurs

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à cela que vise l'accord, <sup>car</sup> il s'agit en l'occurrence d'un acte administratif et non d'un acte de souveraineté, comme l'a dit l'honorable Abdel Hamid Abdel Hak. Il n'est donc pas exact de soutenir que cet acte est en contradiction avec le traité anglo-égyptien ou qu'il porte atteinte à la souveraineté de l'Egypte sur le Soudan.

Pour ce qui est des autres questions sur lesquelles porte l'accord de bon voisinage, tels que les moyens d'empêcher les incursions, la traite des blanches, et autres, ce sont là des questions anciennes régies par le Droit International.

L'orateur ajoute que les accords de Rome n'ont rien changé aux droits et à la situation de l'Egypte. S'ils ont eu une valeur quelconque pour l'Egypte, c'est simplement au point de vue symbolique, car ils peuvent être considérés comme une preuve de bonne volonté réciproque pour l'établissement des relations pacifiques entre nous et les Puissances étrangères, sur une base solide.

L'honorable député termine en remerciant le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères d'avoir déposé sur le Bureau de la Chambre, le 2 Mai courant, deux documents ratifiés par le précédent ministère et qui auraient dû être déposés en temps opportun: le protocole relatif à la lutte contre les actes de piraterie des sous-marins et l'accord de Nyon. Il estime, en ce qui concerne ce dernier accord, qu'il ne suffit pas de le communiquer simplement à la Chambre, mais qu'il faudrait également la consulter à ce sujet, <sup>car</sup> il accorde aux deux flottes anglaise et française la facilité de se servir des ports égyptiens sans aucune restriction. Or, c'est là une question de grande importance, car elle touche la souveraineté du pays.

L'honorable HUSSEIN HAYKAL PACHA, Ministre de l'Instruction Publique, faisant allusion à la déclaration de l'honorable Abdel Hamid Abdel Hak dans laquelle il annonçait qu'il ferait abstraction des questions de parti, dit que la couleur politique n'est pas en

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contradiction avec le service de l'intérêt général; elle n'est reprehensible que si les considérations de parti priment les considérations d'ordre national (Applaudissements). En ce qui concerne les documents, il déclare que l'honorable Mamdouh Riaz en a parlé avec beaucoup de précision.

Répondant à l'allégation d'après laquelle deux Puissances ne peuvent négocier au sujet de questions intéressant une troisième Puissance, sans la participation de cette dernière, le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique dit que de telles négociations sont possibles et qu'en présentant les faits sous cette forme, on les dénature. "L'Angleterre et l'Italie négocient, ajoute-t-il, sans que l'Egypte ait été invitée. Mais la France ne l'a pas été non plus quant aux droits qu'elle a en Méditerranée. Est-ce qu'une interpellation a été déposée pour cela à la Chambre Française ? L'Angleterre n'avait qu'à aviser l'Egypte et elle l'a fait.

Passant à la question de l'échange d'informations sur les forces militaires entre l'Angleterre et l'Italie, le ministre de l'Instruction Publique souligne que les deux Puissances n'agissent en cela que dans le désir de sauvegarder la paix. Tout ce que l'Egypte a à faire, — comme l'a fait le présent gouvernement, — c'est d'organiser sa défense et de renforcer ses forces navales, terrestres et aériennes, pour défendre la sécurité de son territoire. Nul ne saurait lui demander de divulguer ses secrets militaires. Le ministre est convaincu que dans les accords dont il s'agit, le ministère actuel a sauvegardé l'indépendance de l'Egypte et du Soudan, ainsi que les droits de l'Egypte et l'avenir des relations égyptiennes avec l'Italie en Ethiopie et en Lybie.

Répondant à une remarque de l'honorable Fikri Abaza, le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique déclare qu'à son avis, ces accords ne portent nullement atteinte à la souveraineté égyptienne. Toutes les constitutions du monde se contentent de la simple com-

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munication de tels accords au Parlement. Ces accords ne doivent pas, pour des considérations de politique étrangère, faire l'objet de discussions à tout propos et sans propos. Aussi, ne saurait-on accepter la suggestion tendant à ce qu'ils soient soumis à une commission quelconque (Vifs applaudissements).

Dr AHMED MAHER.- Messieurs les Députés,

Je n'ai rien à ajouter à ce qu'a dit mon collègue, l'honorable Mamdouh Riaz, sauf en ce qui concerne un seul point : celui des relations de l'Egypte avec l'Ethiopie. J'estime que l'attitude du gouvernement dans cette question est le seul point qu'on peut lui reprocher. J'espère, - du moment qu'il est en notre pouvoir de le faire, - que nous éviterons ce reproche, dans nos futures négociations. A mon avis, les négociations ou le Protocole que nous avons signé auraient dû porter sur ces relations. Au moment où cette question a été soulevée, nous aurions dû dire que nous avions d'importants intérêts qui ont été lésés et que ces intérêts sont basés sur les liens de l'Eglise Copte avec l'Ethiopie. Le délégué du Patriarche a été renvoyé d'Ethiopie et n'a pas été autorisé à y rentrer. Nous avons abordé ensuite la question de bon voisinage. Nous aurions dû saisir cette occasion pour rétablir le cours normal des choses ou, tout au moins, pour sauvegarder les droits des Egyptiens en Ethiopie. Mais du moment que ce point a été négligé, j'espère que le gouvernement nous promettra qu'au cours des négociations qu'il engagera, il ne manquera <sup>pas</sup> d'en tenir compte et de sauvegarder les droits de l'Egypte à ce point de vue. Telle est la seule observation que j'estime utile de formuler.

Je suis convaincu que tout ce qui a été dit à part cela n'est pas conforme à l'intention de l'honorable Abdel Hamid Abdel Hak d'éviter toute considération de parti pris. D'ailleurs, il n'avait pas besoin de le dire, car nous nous départissons tous des considérations de parti et sommes soucieux d'être avant tout

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des Egyptiens (Vifs applaudissements). Il n'est pas exact de dire que le fait d'aborder la question du Canal de Suez porte atteinte à l'Egypte. Je déclare au contraire que si l'Egypte est invitée à participer à des négociations relatives au Canal de Suez, elle devrait refuser. Car le droit de l'Egypte est formel; il est établi par des traités internationaux signés par l'Angleterre et l'Italie. L'Egypte n'a pas intérêt à participer à des négociations qui pourraient affecter ses droits et sa souveraineté sur le Canal. Quelle serait donc l'attitude du négociateur égyptien, dans ces conditions, si les négociateurs anglais et italiens se mettent d'accord pour porter atteinte à ces droits ? Ne serait-il pas plus logique que l'Egypte ne prenne pas part à de pareilles négociations, si les autres abordent la souveraineté de l'Egypte ou cherchent à y porter atteinte, afin que l'Egypte puisse protester contre cette agression ou s'y opposer et déclarer qu'elle ne saurait l'accepter en aucun cas ? (Vifs applaudissements).

J'ai un autre mot à dire au sujet de la question du Lac Tana à laquelle, avec son habileté bien connue, mon honorable collègue Mohamed Fikri Abaza a fait allusion. Il dit avoir fait une nouvelle découverte : les dates auxquelles ont été faites les déclarations portant sur les droits de l'Egypte sur ce lac. Certes, ces dates ont leur importance, car les anciens accords relatifs aux eaux du Lac Tana ont été conclus en 1902 et 1906, à un moment où il <sup>permis</sup> n'était pas / à l'Egypte de faire entendre sa voix. Ensuite, il y a eu la première déclaration de 1936, avant la conclusion du traité d'alliance entre l'Egypte et l'Angleterre. A ce moment, la position de l'Egypte était exactement celle qu'elle occupait lors des déclarations de 1902 et de 1906. En effet, conformément à la Déclaration du 28 Février et aux réserves y contenues, l'Angleterre a estimé utile de sauvegarder les droits de l'Egypte. Mais après

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la signature du traité d'amitié et d'alliance vers la fin de 1936, il y a eu une confirmation de la déclaration de 1936 de la part de l'Angleterre. C'est à ce moment qu'il aurait fallu dire qu'il y avait atteinte aux droits de l'Egypte, parce qu'il s'agissait d'une question intéressant l'Egypte.

Cette communication aurait dû être faite directement à l'Egypte; au lieu que ce soit l'Angleterre qui nous fit part d'une question se rapportant à l'indépendance et aux droits du pays.

S'il faut apprécier les actes du gouvernement, nous devrions lui adresser des remerciements pour avoir demandé que la notification dont il s'agit soit envoyée directement et officiellement à l'Egypte représentée par son gouvernement.

Tels sont les avantages que nous avons retirés sous ce rapport. Ils rectifient la position internationale de l'Egypte dans ses rapports avec le Gouvernement Italien. C'est là un point pour lequel le gouvernement actuel mérite des félicitations.  
Honorables députés,

Nous avons fini de la question du Lac Tana. Il reste celle des frontières, que mon honorable collègue Mamdouh Riaz a traité en détail. Il n'y a dans l'acte de délimitation et de ces frontières aucune atteinte au droit de propriété ou de souveraineté.  
Messieurs,

Je me suis promis de ne rien vous cacher de nos pourparlers avec l'Angleterre et des concessions que nous avons consenties. Aussi je vous déclare que l'article 11 est une des calamités du traité (Vifs applaudissements prolongés). Les dispositions de cet article nous autorisent à nous mêler de l'administration du Soudan; mais la question de la souveraineté sur ce pays a été réservée. Qu'est-ce que cela signifie ? ... Cela veut dire qu'alors qu'en Egypte nous croyons à cette souveraineté, les Anglais ne nous la redonnent pas. Car s'ils la reconnaissaient, ils auraient accepté les nombreuses formules que nous avons essayé d'incorporer au

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traité de 1936. Je considère que les dispositions de l'article 11 ne sont pas du tout à notre avantage, au cas où il y aurait lieu d'examiner la question de notre souveraineté sur le Soudan conformément aux clauses de ce traité.

Quelle serait notre position dans ce cas ? Si l'Italie veut délimiter les frontières du Soudan, l'Angleterre pourrait répondre que l'Egypte n'a pas le droit de parler de ces frontières. Cela est dû au fait que la Grande-Bretagne ne nous a pas reconnu jusqu'à présent le droit de souveraineté comme je vous l'ai déjà dit. Qu'arrivera-t-il dans ces conditions ? Laisserons-nous les frontières du Soudan exposées à être attaquées parce que nous ne trouvons personne, soit parmi les Egyptiens soit parmi les Anglais pour prendre la défense des droits de l'Egypte et du Soudan ? Ce sont là des questions graves qu'il faudrait aborder sans parti pris et sans passion. (Applaudissements).

S.E. Le Président du Conseil des Ministres a fixé le cadre de la discussion de pareilles questions. En parlant de politique extérieure, nous devons nous inspirer de l'exemple des autres pays sous ce rapport. Nous devons être prudents et réservés et ne pas prêter le flanc à des attaques qui pourraient être nuisibles ou fatales pour notre pays. Nous devons être prudents, très prudents. Je le dis et je le répète, il faut peser longuement les mots et les phrases avant de les prononcer.

Si j'ai quelque chose à ajouter, je dirai que je suis très heureux de ces négociations qui ont eu lieu entre une Puissance alliée et une autre à laquelle nous sommes liés par l'amitié. Cet accord constitue une garantie pour la paix mondiale et particulièrement pour l'Egypte (Vifs applaudissements prolongés).

MOHAIED MAHMOUD PACHA, Président du Conseil des Ministres. - Je remercie vivement en mon nom et au nom du gouvernement, l'honorable Dr Ahmed Maher, chef de l'Opposition, pour les paroles qu'il

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vient de prononcer. Je répète ce que j'ai déjà dit dans mon exposé à savoir que tout ce qui se rapporte aux intérêts de l'Egypte en Abyssinie fera l'objet de négociations entre l'Egypte et l'Italie. J'ai visé particulièrement dans mon exposé le point le plus important dans ces négociations: celui auquel a fait allusion mon ami l'honorable Dr Ahmed Maher. Cependant, j'ai jugé qu'il n'était pas utile de parler des négociations avant de les entamer.

Je déclare à la Chambre que dans nos futurs pourparlers avec l'Italie au sujet de l'Abyssinie, les intérêts de l'Egypte seront rigoureusement sauvegardés dans ce pays auquel nous attachent des liens solides (Vifs applaudissements).

L'honorable ABDEL HAMID ABDEL HAK déclare qu'il n'est pas convaincu par la réponse donnée à son interpellation, car au cours de négociations, le gouvernement s'est borné à recevoir des communications à leur sujet et que, dans cette affaire, l'Angleterre a traité l'Egypte comme elle le faisait avant la conclusion du traité. Tout en remerciant l'honorable Dr Ahmed Maher pour l'attitude qu'il a adoptée relativement aux droits et aux intérêts de l'Egypte au Soudan, l'orateur s'étonne, toutefois, de la déclaration qu'il a faite au sujet de l'article 11 du traité concernant le Soudan, alors qu'il a été un des signataires de ce traité.

L'honorable IBRAHIM ABDEL HADI répond que l'honorable Dr Ahmed Maher a déjà eu l'occasion d'exprimer en toute franchise son opinion au sujet du traité, lors de l'examen de celui-ci par la Chambre.

La Chambre décide la clôture des débats.

Le PRESIDENT soumet à la Chambre la motion suivante présentée par les honorables ABDEL HAMID ABDEL HAK et AHMED ABCUL FETOUH :

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" Nous proposons d'adresser un blâme au gouvernement pour avoir fait preuve de négligence, pour avoir toléré qu'un gouvernement étranger intervienne dans les questions égyptiennes et pour avoir accueilli cette intervention, non par des protestations, mais par des remerciements."

Mise aux voix. la motion est rejetée.

La séance est levée À 9 heures 40 minutes du soir.

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"EGYPTIAN GAZETTE"  
24-4 1915 May 1938

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## PREMIER DEPLORES WAFDIST CRITICISM

### DR. AHMED MAHER'S CONFESSION

#### ARTICLE II OF ANGLO-EGYPTIAN TREATY A CALAMITY

The Anglo-Italian agreement was debated in the Chamber of Deputies last night on an interpellation moved by Deputy Abdel Hamid Abdel Hakk (Wafd), and gave rise to much criticism.

It was argued that Egypt had not been properly consulted and as Abdel Hakk concluded, if recognition of the Italian conquest was inevitable, it should have been at a price commensurate with Egypt's great religious influence in that country.

Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha, the Prime Minister, strongly defended the agreement and deprecated what he described as the false accusation that the Government had accepted to be informed only of the result of the negotiations. He cited several instances of how Egypt's rights had been fully guaranteed in respect of the Suez Canal and Lake Tsana etc.

Deputy Fikry Abaza (Nationalist) endeavoured to show how his earlier opposition to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty had been justified and Dr. Ahmed Maher, leader of the Opposition, described Art. II of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, concerning Egyptian sovereignty in the Sudan, as "a calamity for Egypt."

A motion of censure on the Government received only the support of the Wafdist deputies and the Chamber rose without a vote.

Deputy Hassan el Giddawi (Lib.) first delivered a dissertation on the wording of interpellations, endeavouring to show that if they were badly worded they should be rejected. He was frequently interrupted from all sides of the Chamber, and when the President put the question to the Chamber whether or not the interpellation should be debated, there was an overwhelming majority in favour.

Abdel Hamid Abdel Hakk (Wafd), opening the debate, said that England had concluded a treaty with Egypt but before the ink was dry she had ignored her. All parties, working for the liberty and independence of the country, were interested in the question, but on this occasion he proposed to divest himself of the party robe and wear one of patriotism alone. He then referred to the international tension of recent years, particularly between England and Italy, when war was expected at any moment and Egyptians believed, and rightly, that Egypt would be the first target. In these circumstances a treaty of friendship and alliance had been concluded between England and Egypt and therefore the latter had expected that her representatives should be invited to participate in any Anglo-Italian negotiations, in accordance with the spirit of the treaty, especially since there were such important points to discuss as the Suez Canal, the Western and Sudan frontiers, and Lake Tsana. Indeed, it was only right that Egypt should be invited for neither Britain nor Italy had the right to settle

such questions without Egypt. Unfortunately, however, the Anglo-Italian negotiations had continued throughout February and March and the only thing that Egypt knew was what could be gleaned from Press messages. Therefore, if the facts which he proposed to lay before the Chamber were true, the Government had committed a crime against the Fatherland. Firstly, that negotiations lasted for two months without Egypt being present and secondly that during this period purely Egyptian affairs were discussed and arranged. He maintained that such being the case, Egypt, in international law, had once again become merely a vassal state. He quoted extracts from the Protocol in proof of Egypt's absence and the fact that the Suez Canal, Lake Tsana and an agreement to exchange information regarding the distribution of forces and defence works had all been arranged during this time; Egypt being completely ignored.

Recognition of Abyssinia, he continued, was solely the concern of this country but by signing the *bon voisinage* agreement Egypt had become indirectly a party to recognition.

Again, according to the Protocol, England had obtained the right to fix the Sudan frontiers with Abyssinia and according to the *bon voisinage* agreement, Egypt must agree. But strictly speaking, England had no such right for it was the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

"What a scandal," said Abdel Hakk, "that the Egyptian Minister should be asked to affix his signature to such documents when, since 1919, Egypt had been trying hard to prevent England practising sovereignty rights."

He proceeded to quote Art. II of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty to show that England had only the right to participate in the administration of the Sudan and not sovereignty rights. But according to the Protocol England and Italy had arranged to consider the frontiers between the Sudan and Abyssinia, thereby implying that they were not fixed. Moreover, Egypt had only been invited to fix her signature to this agreement which gave the impression that she had no sovereignty rights.

All this went to show, he said, that Egypt had derived no benefit from the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and the Egyptian would soon realise that they had admitted that England had the right to discuss and modify the Sudan frontiers.

Abdel Hakk proceeded to read the text of a document which, he alleged, the Prime Minister had refused to deposit with the Chamber. It dealt with the agreement regarding troop movements and the exchange of information concerning barracks, defence works, etc., and covered mandated territories, protectorates and territories in Africa within a certain latitude and longitude, including Egypt and the Sudan, on the first of January each year. Did Deputies agree to such an undertaking by Britain who had no such right? It was an arbitrary act on Britain's part for Egypt had been treated like a colony.

The Deputy read the Italian undertaking to reduce the Libyan garrison by half and added that Egypt had not been informed of this until afterwards, although it concerned her western frontier. Once again England had repeated the comedy of the declaration of February 28, 1922, and Mr. Lloyd George's famous letter to the Powers.

But matters did not stop there. Britain had helped the Italians to own Abyssinia and Egypt had thereby lost her former religious influence in that country. He recalled the remarkable reception given to the Coptic Patriarch when he last visited Abyssinia for the Coronation of the Negus and also the fact that during the Italo-Abyssinian war many Egyptians had worked hard to defend that country's independence. England and Italy had agreed about the rights of missionaries but what about the Coptic Church?

He concluded that if it was inevitable for Egypt to recognise the Italian conquest it should have been at a price commensurate with her influence.

#### The Premier's Reply

Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha, Prime Minister, speaking in reply said:—

After the statement which I had the honour to make to the House, it is hardly necessary for me to refute the accusation that the Government was contented to receive a mere notification regarding the questions which in the opinion of the British and Italian Governments, concerned Egypt. It must be pointed out here that the negotiations between the two Governments were not confined to questions which only concerned Egypt. They comprised many other questions of more or less vital interest to the two Powers, the settlement of which is calculated to enhance universal peace and create an atmosphere of friendship and good-will. Nevertheless, the Egyptian Government was informed of everything which related to the Mediterranean, the Near East and Africa. As to the questions which concerned Egypt, especially

the Suez Canal and Lake Tsana about which certain declarations have been made, nothing more was said or done than a repetition of a former declaration which Italy had made to Great Britain about Lake Tsana, and a confirmation of the 1888 Treaty concerning the freedom of passage through the Suez Canal.

The Government was also of opinion that the affirmation to respect the international treaty concerning the free passage through the Suez Canal should be made to Egypt as owner of that Canal; and as a result of her participation in the negotiations, a special letter was addressed to her to that effect. No evidence can be more conclusive than this of the respect in which Egypt's position is held.

The Interpellator ignores perhaps that the frontiers between Abyssinia and the Sudan were the subject of an agreement concluded in 1902 between the British Government and the Emperor of Abyssinia alone.

Nevertheless, the Government is not of opinion that by discussing the frontiers of the Sudan without the participation of Egypt, Great Britain affirmed its exclusive suzerainty over that country. The present Government considers that the question of suzerainty over the Sudan is still reserved, and that the participation of Great Britain and Egypt in the negotiations about the frontiers is merely participation in the administration. Frontiers, as many other things, are not only a question of suzerainty but also of administration. It must be borne in mind that the question of the frontiers of the Sudan is urgent and cannot be postponed until Egypt and Great Britain reach an agreement as to the suzerainty over that country.

As to the Italian forces in Lybia and all that concerns the "voisinage" between the two countries, I need hardly say that all this will be the subject of special negotiations between Egypt and Italy. Egyptian interests in Abyssinia will also be discussed by the two Governments, while Sudanese interests will be discussed by Egypt, Great Britain and Italy. It is unfair, not to say anything more, to describe the agreement of "Bon-voisinage" which Egypt signed with Great Britain and Italy as a recognition on the part of Egypt of the annexation of Abyssinia without any compensation. The Interpellator knows that the question of Abyssinia was to be discussed by the League of Nations in its recent meeting in Geneva. He also knows that everything concerning Egyptian interests in Abyssinia negotiations between Egypt and Italy.

#### "I Told You So"

Deputy Fikry Abaza (Nat.) made an interesting speech of which the keynote was "I told you so." He said that the Prime Minister and Abdel Hamid Abdel Hakk had disagreed about the interpretation of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. He (Fikry Abaza) and Earakat Pasha (President of the Chamber) had been among those who had opposed the Treaty and they were now being proved right. The friends of the Treaty (presumably he meant the Wafd) were now among its bitterest enemies.

Fikry Abaza proceeded to argue that the Chamber should have had a right to debate the subject properly and not merely on an interpellation. If it had been a treaty the Chamber would have had to have ratified it according to Article 46

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of the Constitution but because it was only a Protocol they had no such right, although it was no less important. He hoped that this point would be clarified by the Constitutional Affairs Committee of the Chamber. The subject of frontiers and more especially of Lake Tsana were of vital importance to Egypt. Italy had only confirmed the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty regarding Lake Tsana to England and not to Egypt. Indeed, neither the present nor the previous government knew the full significance of the agreement; they could only guess.

Deputy Mamdouh Riad (Saadist) and Deputy Mahmoud Lutayef Bey (Saadist), who followed, supported the proposal made by Fikry Abaza that the question should be referred to the Constitutional Affairs Committee.

#### The Government View

Dr. Mohamed Hussein Heikal Pasha defended the government, claiming that it had done well. If Egypt had not been invited to participate in the negotiations, what would have happened. France was not invited but no interpellation had been tabled in the French Chamber. The British Government was supposed to inform Egypt when she entered into negotiations concerning universal peace and this she had done in the case of Italy. The matter should not have been debated in the Egyptian Chamber because it concerned the foreign policy of a foreign power.

#### Art. II Of Treaty "A Calamity"

Dr. Ahmed Maher, leader of the Opposition, who followed, criticised the government for not having taken interest in the conversations on Egypt's relations with Abyssinia. It should have borne in mind that Egypt had important interests in Abyssinia which had been transgressed, including relations between the Abyssinian and Coptic Church. The Patriarch's representative had been expelled and had not been allowed to return and it would have been advisable for the Egyptian Government to have seized this opportunity to restore things to normal, or at least to safeguard Egyptian rights.

After a few words of praise for the government, Dr. Ahmed Maher declared that he had taken it upon himself to reveal everything; including things not previously made public, and to say that Article II of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was "a calamity." The English did not accept any expression made by the Egyptian delegation purporting to acknowledge Egypt's sovereignty over the Sudan. He concluded by expressing his pleasure at the agreement concluded between England, Egypt's ally, and Italy, a friendly power.

#### Debate Wound Up

The Premier thanked Dr. Ahmed Maher for his compliments to the Government and assured him that in the coming negotiations he would take Egypt's interests in Abyssinia into consideration.

A proposal was then made to close the debate but Dr. Ahmed Maher maintained that this should not be done until the interpellator had had an opportunity to reply.

Abdel Hamid Abdel Hakk reiterated his earlier arguments and added that Dr. Ahmed Maher had declared Article II. of the treaty to be a catastrophe for Egypt although he was a member of the Egyptian Delegation and one of the signatories.

Fikry Abaza finally withdrew his proposal. A motion of censure was then moved by the Wafdist deputies for the Government's failure to protest against Egypt's non-participation in the Anglo-Italian negotiations, but only the Wafd voted in support.

The Chamber then rose to meet on Monday next at 6 p.m.

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J

J 2294

37  
3 JUN 1938

Registry } J 2294/38/16.  
Number

FROM Communicated by  
M. de Charbonnière  
(French Embassy).  
No.

Dated  
Received 8th June, 1938.  
in Registry

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Anglo-Italian agreement: declaration re-affirming  
Suez Canal Convention of 1888.

Aide-mémoire raising points in connexion with the Anglo-Italian declaration of 16th April, 1938, re-affirming the Suez Canal Convention of 1888; and requesting an explanation of these points for communication to the French Government.

Last Paper.

J 2246

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

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Charbonnière  
(French Emb. from  
Mr. Beninck)

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21.7.38

(Index.)

1/10  
2/8

\* Next Paper.

J 2327

(J 665/73/16)

(Minutes.)

M. de Charbonnière left the enclosed aide mémoire with me yesterday evening. I told him that we would have to look into the points raised, but that the history of the Anglo-Italian declaration re-affirming the intention to abide by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 was as follows. ~~Before the Anglo-Italian conversations began,~~ We had anticipated that the Italians would put forward some request as regards the Suez Canal. Rumours had appeared in the newspapers that the Italians would demand the right to share in the maintenance of freedom of transit through the Canal and the right to guard it; ~~but~~ this would, of course, have been quite unacceptable and fortunately a démenti was issued, stating that the Italians had no such intention. We had ~~also~~ feared that they might put forward a request that we should help them to obtain seats for Italian nationals on the Board of Directors of the Company. No such request was, however, received, but they asked that the two governments should mutually reaffirm their intention to abide by the terms of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888. As this Convention has been in force 50 years and there has never been any question of

16/31 11/37 F.O.P.

His...

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J 1585

16 APR 1938

From EGYPT.

247

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo),  
14th April, 1938.

D. 4.20 p.m. 14th April, 1938.

R. 4.15 p.m. 14th April, 1938.

No. 262.

IMMEDIATE.

Rome conversations.

Prime Minister startled me this morning by saying that he had it in mind to send Bedawi Pasha to keep Egyptian Minister straight.

2. I suggested this would probably hold matter up and emphasized the need for speed for international reasons. I understood it was hoped to sign by next Thursday. Furthermore with all respect to Bedawi my experience was that he invariably made legalistic difficulties which would be lamentable on this occasion.

3. Prime Minister assured me most emphatically that such would not be the case in the present instance. Bedawi had been consulted by him throughout and everything <sup>done</sup> with his full concurrence.

4. I still continued to pour icy cold water on this idea but am not clear that I was successful. I heard Prime Minister send for Bedawi the very moment I left his room.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 262 of 14th April, repeated to Rome.

APR 15 1938  
T.O. REGIST

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Cypher telegram to Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).

Foreign Office. 14th April, 1958. 11 p.m.

No. 250.

MOST IMMEDIATE. \*\*\*\*\*

Since drafting your telegram No. 262 you will have received my telegram No. 247, and seen that it is the intention to sign all documents if humanly possible on April 18th (at 6.50 p.m. Rome time). Despatch of Bedawi would in these circumstances certainly not facilitate this. Could not matters be arranged by Egyptian Government by telephone direct with Rome?

I do not understand your reference to possible signature by "next Thursday" (April 21st) as in my telegram No. 168 of March 30th I stated that it was "anticipated that the agreement will be signed any time between April 15th and April 18th", while in my telegram No. 240 of this morning date of April 16th is foreshadowed.

Repeated to Rome No. 267.

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From EGYPT.

J 1586

16 APR 1938 250

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).  
14th April, 1938.

D. 10.14 p.m., 14th April, 1938.

R. 9.30 a.m., 15th April, 1938.

No. 265.

.....

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegrams Nos. 240 and 241.

This sudden notification of intention to sign on Saturday has come as somewhat of a shock to the Egyptians.

2. The Prime Minister being out of Cairo tonight I got into touch with him by telephone and he deputed Bedawi to come round at once and discuss the position.

3. I explained to Bedawi proposed arrangements in regard to publication and suggested necessary instructions be at once telegraphed to Egyptian Minister in Rome.

4. I also gave gist of Rome telegram No. 400 in regard to proposed procedure for Suez Canal formula.

5. He was definitely inclined to be difficult over Lake Tsana and is still anxious to secure some form of direct assurance to Egypt. I explained to him difficulties of this and he undertook to discuss with the Prime Minister procedure I had proposed to the latter this morning (see my telegram No. 261).

6. He will see the Prime Minister early tomorrow morning and left me saying that I might expect to hear from the Prime Minister about noon regarding both Suez and Tsana.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 265 April 14th;  
repeated to Rome.

RECEIVED

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From EGYPT.

252  
J 1587  
16 APR 1958

Decode  
and  
Decypher

Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).  
15th April, 1958.

D. 1.26 p.m. 15th April, 1958.

R. 2.15 p.m. 15th April, 1958.

No. 267.

.....

IMMEDIATE. "R" begins:

Wafd executive committee at meeting yesterday passed, according to the press, resolution and issued manifesto condemning Egyptian Government for permitting His Majesty's Government to negotiate on vital Egyptian interests without their participation. Press versions differ and owing to Friday holiday I am unable to ascertain exact terms from official sources. In substance however of all versions agree the Wafd, in name of Egyptian nation (1) charge both British and Egyptian Governments with breach of undertaking in treaty of alliance and (2) reserve full liberty to regard any agreement reached in Rome as null and void if it should be in any way prejudicial to Egyptian interests. One journal states further that owing to this breach of treaty obligations, Wafd consider Anglo-Egyptian Treaty itself null and void.

These declarations are the culmination of persistent campaign in the Wafd press since the election results criticising the alleged high-handed action and consequent breach of faith of His Majesty's Government in excluding Egypt from active participation in the negotiations concerning Egyptian interests and disputing reference in speech from the throne to "conversations which are being conducted in Rome with the participation of my Government". End of "R".

It is clear to me that recent hesitating and wary attitude of the Prime Minister has been induced by these developments.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 267 of April 15th; repeated to Rome.

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J 1888

From: EGYPT.

Decode. Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).

16 APR 1938  
April 15th, 1938.

254

D. 4.20.p.m. April 15th, 1938.

R. 5.15.p.m. April 15th, 1938.

No. 268. (R).

MOST IMMEDIATE.

-----OOO-----

My telegram No. 267.

Prime Minister has now represented to me that Wafd resolution has completely altered situation and that he must press for more direct participation of Egypt in signed settlement at Rome. In brief it is essential to him that Egypt shall participate on an equal footing as regards both form and substance in Suez Canal and Lake Tsana formulae as well as in bon voisinage agreement.

2. Prime Minister would much prefer that bon voisinage agreement should, like Suez Canal and Lake Tsana formulae, form an annex to main protocol and that following paragraph should be inserted after preamble to protocol:

"Egyptian Government being an interested party in agreements and declarations contemplated above as regards Suez Canal and Lake Tsana and bon voisinage agreement has been invited to participate in their elaboration.

Monsieur - - - - (Egyptian Minister, full name and style) duly authorised has signed agreements and declarations in question".

3. While pressing for this procedure if at all possible Prime Minister would in the last resort agree to Suez Canal and Lake Tsana formulae being removed from the main protocol and concluded separately on analogy of what has been proposed hitherto in regard to bon voisinage agreement.

4.....

16 APR 1938  
RECEIVED

11-12-70

2. 255

4. As regards Suez Canal, Prime Minister would much prefer declaration to be tripartite in form but in the last resort would agree alternatively to its being communicated in its present form to Egyptian Government in separate identic letters by Lord Perth and Count Ciano as hitherto proposed. But in the latter case he would wish that letters should state that declaration is being communicated to Egyptian Government "as the territorial power". Egyptian Minister in his reply would state:

"Egyptian Government take note of intention of Government of United Kingdom and Italian Government and as the territorial power associates itself therewith".

5. Lake Tsana is the real stumbling block. Prime Minister represented strongly that it would place him in an impossible position if Italian declaration were simply communicated to Egyptian Government. What he requires is a direct assurance to Egypt. He wishes that Lake Tsana formula should be embodied in a single document the following paragraph being added to declaration already contemplated:

"Italian Government declare that they give to Egyptian Government as regards régime of Lake Tsana assurances identical with those given His Britannic Majesty's Government by above declaration."

6. Bedawi has explained that Egyptian Government regard obligations of Italian Government towards His Majesty's Government as applying equally to Egypt since they were contracted towards His Majesty's Government as codominus of Sudan and therefore inured to benefit of Egypt.

7. I strongly urged practical difficulties of these last minute changes and pointed out that His Majesty's Government might be compelled to proceed alone, quoting your instructions to that effect several times. Rather than hold the matter up the

Prime .....

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5.256

Prime Minister told me he would be prepared in the last resort and most unwillingly, for Egyptian Minister to sign bon voisinage agreement as originally intended and to allow proposed procedure as regards Suez Canal to stand. But as regards Lake Tsana he cannot possibly give way and unless we can meet his point of view he would be compelled to ask that there should be no mention of Lake Tsana in the settlement and that this question should be entirely reserved both for ourselves and for Egypt for subsequent discussion with Italians.

8. While prepared to make these concessions the Prime Minister emphasized the extreme difficulty of his position in the light of Wafd declaration and urged that every effort should be made to meet his requirements. He is already faced with an interpellation in Parliament and is greatly worried at his position both on general grounds and more especially in view of the statement in the speech from the throne that Egypt was participating in these discussions, a claim which is now challenged by Wafd.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 268.

Repeated to Rome.

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To: EGYPT.

257

Telegram (en clair) to Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).

Foreign Office. April 15th, 1938. 9.30.p.m.

No. 253. IMMEDIATE.

(By Telephone).

-----oOo-----

Your telegrams Nos. 267 and 270 inclusive [of April 15th: Anglo-Italian negotiations].

We fully realise the difficulties of the Egyptian Government but we on our side have our difficulties too. We are within less than 24 hours of the time fixed for signature and the greater part of the documents have already been agreed and printed. The Egyptian Government agreed some days ago to the signature of the Bon Voisinage Agreement (your telegram No. 241) and in all the circumstances and with the best will in the world we cannot meet them further (for reasons which will be clear from the latter part of the telegram) than to adopt the Egyptian Prime Minister's final suggestion (paragraph 7 of your telegram No. 268).

As regards Tsana the following considerations are relevant.

At this late stage it would be impossible to make far reaching modification in protocol as suggested in paragraph 2 of your telegram No. 268 [of April 15th].

It will not be practicable if protocol which is bilateral remains unchanged to substitute for present bilateral declaration a new tripartite one regarding Tsana.

In order therefore to meet as far as possible wishes of Egyptian Government only satisfactory line of action will be to extract Lake Tsana annex from those attached to protocol and to negotiate as soon as may be possible a tripartite declaration on this subject.

Assuming Egyptian and Italian Governments agreed in this course it would seem appropriate that Italian Government and His Majesty's Government should place on record in a document to be signed with the other documents on 16th April a statement to effect that matter of Lake Tsana has been amicably discussed and will be further pursued in conjunction with the Egyptian Government in near future.

Repeated to Rome No. 269 (en clair by telephone).

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From EGYPT.

J 1589  
16 APR 1958

259

Decypher. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).  
15th April, 1958.

D. 4.24 p.m. 15th April, 1958.

R. 4.50 p.m. 15th April, 1958.

No. 269.

.....

MOST IMMEDIATE.

My immediately preceding telegram.

From our point of view there would be particular advantage in Egypt's claim to participate in tripartite Suez Canal declaration, for they thereby not only commit themselves to a re-affirmation of their intention to respect and abide by provisions of 1888 Convention but also to an interpretation of it, to the effect that it guarantees at all times and for all Powers freedom of use of Suez Canal.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 269 April 15th; repeated to Rome telegram No. 54.

APR  
16  
F.O. REGISTRY.

17 2 71/

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From EGYPT.

Decode. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo),  
15th April, 1938.

261

D. 12.55 a.m., 16th April, 1938.

R. 12.18 a.m., 16th April, 1938.

No. 271. (R).

.....

J 1590

16 APR 1938

MOST IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 253. NY

I read this telegram to Prime Minister tonight and while regretting that it represented "second best" he agreed to accept procedure proposed in last two paragraphs. He assumed and hoped that statement referred to in last paragraph would form an annex to Protocol.

2. As regards Suez Canal it is understood that joint declaration by His Majesty's Government and Italian Government will be an annex to Protocol and that it will be communicated to Egyptian Minister at Rome in separate identic letters by Lord Perth and Count Ciano. Prime Minister wished me to reiterate his desire that it should be communicated to Egyptian Government "as the territorial Power" and Egyptian Minister will be instructed to reply in terms quoted in paragraph 4 of my telegram No. 268.

3. Egyptian Minister will now require Full Powers only for bon voisinage agreement and Prime Minister promised that these would be telegraphed to Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs early on April 16th.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 271 of April 15th; repeated to Rome.

16 APR 1938  
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J 1591

J

From: ITALY.

16 APR 1938

Decypher. The Earl of Perth, (Rome).  
April 15th, 1938.

263

D. 2.50.a.m. April 16th, 1938.

R. 9.30.a.m. April 16th, 1938.

No. 409.

IMMEDIATE.

-----000-----

Sir M. Lampson's telegram No. 268 and your telegram No. 255 to Cairo.

1. Suez Canal.

Italian Government have no objection to words "as the territorial power concerned" being inserted in the four letters to be exchanged.

2. Lake Tsana.

I have reason to believe Italian Government would be willing to agree to address a letter to Egyptian Minister in Rome recording Italian declaration to His Majesty's Government and adding following paragraph:

"Further I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that Italian Government for their part agree that Egyptian Government should benefit from assurances given to His Majesty's Government in above-mentioned declaration concerning Lake Tsana. It is understood that present declaration does not imply for the Italian Government any new or additional obligation whatsoever beyond those deriving from above-mentioned declaration".

Italian Government will require, however, as a condition to which I assume you will have no objection that I should address a letter to Egyptian Minister equally recording Italian declaration to His Majesty's Government and adding following paragraph:

"Further I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government for their part agree that Egyptian

Government.....

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2.

Government should benefit from assurances given to His Majesty's Government in above-mentioned declaration concerning Lake Tsana". 264

From Egyptian point of view surely this is much to be preferred. Does not statement that His Majesty's Government and Italian Government have during conversations discussed Lake Tsana and that the question will be further pursued in near future in conjunction with Egyptian Government place the latter in a secondary position which I understand is what Egyptian Prime Minister particularly wishes to avoid?

Quite apart from foregoing considerations I feel bound to point out that elimination of Lake Tsana declaration from the main agreement will necessitate extensive amendments of texts already printed (indeed I do not know if time would allow of these) while to alter text of exchange of letters is still practicable provided that I get a decision by noon.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 409.

Repeated to Cairo.

16 APR 1952  
FO. REGISTRY.

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J

J 1594  
265  
18 APR 1938

Registry } J 1594/38/16.  
Number

TELEGRAM FROM

Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo)

No.

273.

Dated

16th April, 1938.

Received

in Registry } 18th April,  
1938.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Anglo-Italian Agreement: participation of Egypt.

Refers to Cairo telegram No. 267 of 15th April (J 1587/38/16).

Gives close translation of resolutions passed by the Wafd Executive as published by Wafd El **MISY**.

(1) present Egyptian Government to be held responsible for tampering with the independence of the country  
(2) British Government to be held responsible for breaking its obligations embodied in Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance (3) Egypt does not approve of the negotiations in their present form.

Last Paper.

J 1591

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Action completed.)

DP.  
21.4.38

(Index.)

25  
14

Next Paper.

J 16149

(Minutes.)

The charge that *knely* have "negotiated with a foreign Power on purely Egyptian affairs without allowing the Egyptian Govt. to participate" does not of course hold water for one moment.

Lampson  
19/4

No: & the *Sept* P.M.'s statement in Parliament on April 18 should have sufficed to explode the charge, though the Naksasite Wafd may pretend not to be content.

R. J. Campbell  
20/4

If raised in *Party* question, we can cope with it easily  
20.20.48

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From EGYPT.

Decode. Sir M. Lampson (Cairo),  
16th April, 1938.

D. 8.32 p.m. 16th April, 1938.

R. 8.45 p.m. 16th April, 1938.

No. 275. (R).

266  
J 1534  
18 APR 1938

My telegram No. 267. - 2. 1587/38/16

I have now obtained copy of resolutions passed by the  
Wafd Executive as published by Wafd el Misri.

Following is close translation.

A. To hold present Egyptian Government responsible for  
tampering with the independence of the country and for  
attempting to bring it back to a régime akin to a hated  
protectorate to get rid of which Egyptians gave their lives.

B. To hold British Government responsible for breaking  
its obligations embodied in Anglo-Egyptian treaty of alliance  
and for having placed itself in a position of Egypt's guardian  
in negotiation with a foreign Power on purely Egyptian affairs  
without allowing Egyptian Government to participate in such  
negotiations.

C. Wafd declare in the name of the Egyptian nation that  
Egypt does not approve of these negotiations in their present  
form nor does she consider the results as binding on her.

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ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT.

PROTOCOL.

The GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND and the ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, animated by the desire to place the relations between the two countries on a solid and lasting basis and to contribute to the general cause of peace and security, have decided to undertake conversations in order to reach agreement on questions of mutual concern; and the said conversations having taken place;

His Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL OF PERTH, G.C.M.G., C.B., His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Rome, and

His Excellency Count GALEAZZO CIANO di CORTELLAZZO, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

duly authorised for that purpose by their respective Governments, have drawn up the present Protocol and have signed the Agreements and Declarations annexed hereto, each of which shall be regarded as a separate and self-contained instrument:-

(1) Reaffirmation of the Declaration of the 2nd January, 1937, regarding the Mediterranean, and of the Notes exchanged on the 31st December, 1936;

(2) Agreement regarding the Exchange of Military Information; ...

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His Excellency the Right Honourable the EARL OF PERTH, G.C.M.G., C.B., His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Rome, and

His Excellency Count GALEAZZO CIANO di CORTELLAZZO, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

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Information;

- (3) Agreement regarding certain Areas in the Middle East;
- (4) Declaration regarding Propaganda;
- (5) Declaration regarding Lake Tsana;
- (6) Declaration regarding the Military Duties of Natives of Italian East Africa;
- (7) Declaration regarding the free Exercise of Religion and the Treatment of British religious Bodies in Italian East Africa.
- (8) Declaration regarding the Suez Canal.

The said instruments shall take effect on such date as the two Governments shall together determine. Except in so far as any of them contain provisions with regard to their revision or duration, each of the said instruments shall remain in force indefinitely, but should either Government at any time consider that a change of circumstances renders the revision of any of these instruments necessary, the two Governments will consult together with a view to such a revision.

The two Governments agree that, immediately after the taking effect of the said instruments, negotiations will be opened, in which the Egyptian Government will be invited to participate so far as all questions affecting Egypt or the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan are concerned, with a view to a definitive agreement on the boundaries between the Sudan, Kenya and British Somaliland on the one side and Italian East Africa on the other; and with regard to other questions affecting reciprocally (a) Italian interests on the one hand and British, Egyptian or Sudan interests on the other hand in the above-mentioned territories, and (b) the relations between those territories. These negotiations will also include the question of commercial relations between the Sudan and Italian East Africa.

It ...

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It is also agreed that negotiations between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Italian Government will take place as soon as possible on the subject of commercial relations between Italian East Africa and the United Kingdom, India, and British colonies, overseas territories, protectorates and mandated territories administered by the Government of the United Kingdom, including the subject of the application, on conditions to be established, to the whole of Italian East Africa of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation signed at Rome on the 15th June, 1833. These negotiations will be inspired by the common desire to further commercial relations between these territories and to ensure adequate facilities for trade.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTT.

CIALO.

ANNEX 1. ...

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ANNEX I.

REAFFIRMATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE 2ND JANUARY, 1937,  
REGARDING THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND OF THE NOTES EXCHANGED ON  
THE 31st DECEMBER, 1936.

The GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM and the ITALIAN  
GOVERNMENT hereby reaffirm the Declaration signed in Rome  
on the 2nd January, 1937, regarding the Mediterranean, and  
the Notes exchanged between the two Governments on the  
31st December, 1936, regarding the status quo in the  
Western Mediterranean.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in  
the English and Italian languages, both of which shall  
have equal force.

PERTH

CIANO

ANNEX 2.

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ANNEX 2.

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AGREEMENT REGARDING THE EXCHANGE OF MILITARY INFORMATION.

The GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM and the ITALIAN GOVERNMENT agree that in the month of January each year a reciprocal exchange of information shall take place through the Naval, Military and Air Attachés in London and Rome regarding any major prospective administrative movements or redistribution of their respective naval, military and air forces. This exchange of information will take place in respect of such forces stationed in or based on:

(1) overseas possessions of either Party (which phrase shall for this purpose be deemed to include protectorates and mandated territories) in or with a seaboard on the Mediterranean, the Red Sea or the Gulf of Aden, and

(2) territories in Africa other than those referred to in paragraph (1) above and lying in an area bounded on the west by longitude 20° east and on the south by latitude 7° south.

Such an exchange of information will not necessarily preclude the occasional communication of supplementary military information should either party consider that the political circumstances of the moment make it desirable.

The two Governments further agree to notify each other in advance of any decision to provide new naval or air bases in the Mediterranean east of longitude 19° east and in the Red Sea or approaches thereto.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH

CIANO

ANNEX 3.

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ANNEX 3.

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ANGLO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT  
REGARDING CERTAIN AREAS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

-----

The GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND and the ITALIAN GOVERNMENT,

being desirous of ensuring that there shall be no  
conflict between their respective policies in regard to the  
areas in the Middle East referred to in the present agreement,

being desirous, moreover, that the same friendly spirit  
which has attended the signing of today's Protocol, and of  
the documents annexed thereto, should also animate their  
relations in regard to those areas,

have agreed as follows:-

ARTICLE 1.

Neither Party will conclude any agreement or take any  
action which might in any way impair the independence or  
integrity of Saudi Arabia or of the Yemen.

ARTICLE 2.

Neither Party will obtain or seek to obtain a privileged  
position of a political character in any territory which at  
present belongs to Saudi Arabia or to the Yemen or in any  
territory which either of those States may hereafter acquire.

ARTICLE 3. ...

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#### ARTICLE 3.

The two Parties recognise that, in addition to the obligations incumbent on each of them in virtue of Articles 1 and 2 hereof, it is in the common interest of both of them that no other Power should acquire or seek to acquire sovereignty or any privileged position of a political character in any territory which at present belongs to Saudi Arabia or to the Yemen or which either of those States may hereafter acquire, including any islands in the Red Sea belonging to either of those States, or in any other islands in the Red Sea to which Turkey renounced her rights by Article 16 of the Treaty of Peace signed at Lausanne on the 24th July, 1923. In particular they regard it as an essential interest of each of them that no other Power should acquire sovereignty or any privileged position on any part of the coast of the Red Sea which at present belongs to Saudi Arabia or to the Yemen or in any of the aforesaid islands.

#### ARTICLE 4.

(1) As regards those islands in the Red Sea to which Turkey renounced her rights by Article 16 of the Treaty of Peace signed at Lausanne on the 24th July, 1923, and which are not comprised in the territory of Saudi Arabia or of the Yemen, neither Party will in or in regard to any such island:-

- a) establish its sovereignty, or
- b) erect fortifications or defences.

(2) It is agreed that neither Party will object to:-

- a) the presence of British officials at Kamaran for the purpose of securing the sanitary service of the pilgrimage to Mecca in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement concluded at Paris on the 19th June, 1926, between the Governments of Great Britain ...

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Britain and Northern Ireland and of India, on the one part, and the Government of the Netherlands, on the other part; it is also understood that the Italian Government may appoint an Italian Medical Officer to be stationed there on the same conditions as the Netherlands Medical Officer under the said Agreement;

b) the presence of Italian officials at Great Hanish, Little Hanish and Jebel Zukur for the purpose of protecting the fishermen who resort to those islands;

c) the presence at Abu Ail, Centre Peak and Jebel Teir of such persons as are required for the maintenance of the lights on those islands.

#### ARTICLE 5.

(1) The two Parties agree that it is in the common interest of both of them that there shall be peace between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen and within the territories of those States. But, while they will at all times exert their good offices in the cause of peace, they will not intervene in any conflict which, despite their good offices, may break out between or within those States.

(2) The two Parties also recognise that it is in the common interest of both of them that no other Power should intervene in any such conflict.

#### ARTICLE 6.

As regards the zone of Arabia lying to the east and south of the present boundaries of Saudi Arabia and of the Yemen or of any future boundaries which may be established by agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom, on the one hand, and the Governments of Saudi Arabia or of the Yemen, ...

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Yemen, on the other:

(1) The Government of the United Kingdom declare that in the territories of the Arab rulers under their protection within this zone:

a) no action shall be taken by the Government of the United Kingdom, which shall be such as to prejudice in any way the independence or integrity of Saudi Arabia or of the Yemen (which both Parties have undertaken to respect in Article 1 hereof), within any territory at present belonging to those States or within any additional territory which may be recognised by the Government of the United Kingdom as belonging to either of those States as a result of any agreement which may hereafter be concluded between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of either of them;

b) the Government of the United Kingdom will not undertake, or cause to be undertaken, any military preparations or works other than military preparations or works of a purely defensive character for the defence of the said territories or of the communications between different parts of the British Empire. Furthermore, the Government of the United Kingdom will not enrol the inhabitants of any of these territories, or cause them to be enrolled, in any military forces other than forces designed and suited solely for the preservation of order and for local defence;

c) while the Government of the United Kingdom reserve the liberty to take in these territories such steps as may be necessary for the preservation of order and the development of the country, they intend to maintain the autonomy of the Arab rulers under their protection.

(2) ...

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(2) The Italian Government declare that they will not seek to acquire any political influence in this zone.

ARTICLE 7.

The Government of the United Kingdom declare that within the limits of the Aden Protectorate as defined in the Aden Protectorate Order, 1937, Italian citizens and subjects (including Italian companies) shall have liberty to come, with their ships and goods, to all places and ports, and they shall have freedom of entry, travel and residence and the right to exercise there any description of business, profession, occupation or industry, so long as they satisfy and observe the conditions and regulations from time to time applicable in the Protectorate to the citizens and subjects and ships of any country not being a territory under the sovereignty, suzerainty, protection or mandate of His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India.

ARTICLE 8.

(1) Should either Party at any time give notice to the other that they consider that a change has taken place in the circumstances obtaining at the time of the entry into force of the present Agreement, such as to necessitate a modification of the provisions of the Agreement, the two Parties will enter into negotiations with a view to the revision or amendment of any of the provisions of the Agreement.

(2) At any time after the expiration of a period of ten years from the entry into force of this Agreement either Party  
may ...

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may notify the other of its intention to determine the Agreement. Any such notification shall take effect three months after the date on which it is made.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1958, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH.

CIANO.

ANNEX 4. ...

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ANNEX 4.

DECLARATION REGARDING PROPAGANDA

The two Governments welcome the opportunity afforded by the present occasion to place on record their agreement that any attempt by either of them to employ the methods of publicity or propaganda at its disposal in order to injure the interests of the other would be inconsistent with the good relations which it is the object of the present Agreement to establish and maintain between the two Governments and the peoples of their respective countries.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH

CIANO

ANNEX 5.

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ANNEX 5.

DECLARATION REGARDING LAKE TSANA.

The Italian Government confirm to the Government of the United Kingdom the assurance given by them to the Government of the United Kingdom on the 3rd April, 1936, and reiterated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome on the 31st December, 1936, to the effect that the Italian Government were fully conscious of their obligations towards the Government of the United Kingdom in the matter of Lake Tsana and had no intention whatever of overlooking or repudiating them.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH

CIANO

ANNEX 6.

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ANNEX 6.

DECLARATION REGARDING THE MILITARY DUTIES OF NATIVES  
OF ITALIAN EAST AFRICA.

The Italian Government reaffirm the assurance which they gave in their Note to the League of Nations of the 29th June, 1936, that Italy on her side was willing to accept the principle that natives of Italian East Africa should not be compelled to undertake military duties other than local policing and territorial defence.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

• PERTH.

CUANO.

ANNEX 7. ...

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ANNEX 7.

DECLARATION REGARDING THE FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION AND THE  
TREATMENT OF BRITISH RELIGIOUS BODIES IN ITALIAN EAST AFRICA.

Without prejudice to any Treaty engagements which may be applicable, the Italian Government declare that they intend to assure to British nationals in Italian East Africa the free exercise of all cults compatible with public order and good morals; and in this spirit they will examine favourably any request which may reach them from the British side to assure in Italian East Africa religious assistance to British nationals; and that as regards other activities of British religious Bodies in Italian East Africa in humanitarian and benevolent spheres, such requests as may reach the Italian Government will be examined, the general line of policy of the Royal Government in this matter and the principles of legislation in force in Italian East Africa being borne in mind.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH.

CIANO.

ANNEX 8. ...

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ANNEX 8.

DECLARATION REGARDING THE SUEZ CANAL.

The GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM and the ITALIAN GOVERNMENT hereby reaffirm their intention always to respect and abide by the provisions of the Convention signed at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1838, which guarantees at all times and for all Powers the free use of the Suez Canal.

DONE at Rome, in duplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which shall have equal force.

PERTH.

CLANO.

*Notes.*  
EXCHANGES OF ~~LETTERS~~.

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THE ITALIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
TO HIS MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT ROME.

No. 3514.

(Translation.)

ROME,

16th April, 1938.

Your Excellency,

During our recent conversations Your Excellency has referred to the question of the strength of the Italian forces in Libya.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Head of the Government has given orders for a diminution of these forces. Withdrawals have already begun at the rate of 1,000 a week and will be continued at not less than this rate until the Italian Libyan effectives reach peace strength. This will constitute an ultimate diminution of these effectives by not less than half the numbers present in Libya when our conversations commenced.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

(Signed) CIANO.

His Excellency

The Right Honourable

The Earl of Perth, G.C.M.G., C.B.,

His Majesty's Ambassador,

Rome.

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No. 112.

BRITISH EMBASSY,

ROME.

The 16th April, 1938.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Note of today's date in which Your Excellency informed me of the intentions of the Head of the Italian Government with regard to the progressive diminution of the Italian forces in Libya.

I shall have pleasure in communicating this information to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

PERTH.

His Excellency

Count Galeazzo Ciano,

Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Rome.

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THE ITALIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
TO HIS MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT ROME.

291

No. 5515.

ROME,

(Translation).

16th April, 1938.

Your Excellency,

Your Excellency will remember that, in the course of our recent conversations, I gave Your Excellency certain assurances regarding the policy of the Italian Government in connexion with Spain. I now wish to reaffirm those assurances and to place them on record.

First, the Italian Government have the honour to confirm their full adherence to the United Kingdom formula for the proportional evacuation of the foreign volunteers from Spain, and pledge themselves to give practical and real application to such an evacuation at the moment and on the conditions which shall be determined by the Non-Intervention Committee on the basis of the above mentioned formula.

I desire secondly to reaffirm that if this evacuation has not been completed at the moment of the termination of the Spanish civil war, all remaining Italian volunteers will forthwith leave Spanish territory and all Italian war-material will simultaneously be withdrawn.

I wish thirdly to repeat my previous assurance that the Italian Government have no territorial or political aims, and  
seek

His Excellency

the Right Honourable

the Earl of Perth, G.C.M.G., C.B.,

His Majesty's Ambassador,

ROME.

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seek no privileged economic position, in or with regard to either Metropolitan Spain, the Balearic Islands, any of the Spanish possessions overseas, or the Spanish zone of Morocco, and that they have no intention whatever of keeping any armed forces in any of the said territories.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

(Signed) CIANO.

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BRITISH EMBASSY

ROME

the 16th April, 1938.

No. 113.

Your Excellency,

In reply to Your Excellency's Note of to-day's date, I have the honour to take note of the reaffirmation contained therein of the assurances which Your Excellency has already given me, during the course of our recent conversations, regarding the policy of the Italian Government in connexion with Spain. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, to whom I shall not fail to transmit this communication, will, I feel sure, be gratified at its contents. In this connexion I hardly need to remind Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government regard a settlement of the Spanish question as a prerequisite of the entry into force of the agreement between our two Governments.

I have further the honour to inform Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government, being desirous that such obstacles as may at present be held to impede the freedom of member States as regards recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia should be removed, intend to take steps at the forthcoming meeting of the Council of the League of Nations for the purpose of clarifying the situation of member States in this regard.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

PERTH.

His Excellency Count Galeazzo Ciano

Minister for Foreign Affairs,

ROME.

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THE ITALIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
TO HIS MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT ROME

No. 3516.

Rome, 16th April 1938.

(Translation).

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Italian Government have decided to accede to the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 31 of that Treaty. This accession will take place so soon as the instruments annexed to the Protocol signed this day come into force.

In advising Your Excellency of the foregoing I desire to add that the Italian Government intend in the meantime to act in conformity with the provisions of the aforesaid Treaty.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

(Signed) CIANO.

His Excellency the Right Honourable the Earl of Perth, G.C.M.G., C.B.,

His Majesty's Ambassador,

Rome.

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British Embassy

Rome

the 16th April, 1938.

No. 114.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Note of today's date in which Your Excellency informed me of the decision of the Italian Government to accede to the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, so soon as the instruments annexed to the Protocol signed this day come into force, and in the meantime to act in conformity with the provisions of the aforesaid Treaty.

I shall have pleasure in communicating this decision to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

PERTH.

His Excellency Count Galeazzo Ciano  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Rome.

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## BON VOISINAGE AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE EGYPTIAN  
GOVERNMENT AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

The ITALIAN GOVERNMENT on the one hand and, on the other hand, in respect of Kenya and British Somaliland, the GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND and, in respect of the Sudan, the GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM and the EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT;

desiring to provide for friendly relations in East Africa;

undertake, in addition to proceeding in due course to the discussion of detailed questions connected with the frontiers between Italian East Africa and the Sudan, Kenya and British Somaliland as provided in the Protocol signed to-day by the Government of the United Kingdom and the Italian Government, at all times to co-operate for the preservation of good neighbourly relations between the said territories and to endeavour by every means in their power to prevent raids or other unlawful acts of violence being carried out across the frontiers of any of the above-mentioned territories;

agree that in view of the fact that, by virtue of the Italian Decree of the 12th April, 1936, slavery was prohibited in Ethiopia, as it had already been abolished in the other above-mentioned territories, the good neighbourly relations referred to above shall include co-operation to prevent the evasion of the anti-slavery laws of the respective territories;

agree that nationals of the other Party shall not be enrolled in the native troops, bands or formations of a military nature maintained in the abovementioned territories, including in particular any such nationals who are deserters from the troops, bands or formations maintained in, or refugees from, the territories of the other Party.

In.....

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2.

In WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Agreement.

DONE at Rome, in triplicate, the 16th April, 1938, in the English and Italian languages, both of which have equal force.

PERTH.

MOSTAFA EL-SADEK.

CIANO.

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Notes Exchanged between Lord Perth and Count Ciano on the one hand and the Egyptian Minister in Rome on the other regarding the Lake Tsana Declaration (Annex 5 to the Protocol).

BRITISH EMBASSY,

ROME.

16th April, 1938.

No. 1/590/38.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding Lake Tsana was signed today by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and myself as Annex 5 to the Protocol which Count Ciano and I have also signed today:-

"The Italian Government confirm to the Government of the United Kingdom the assurance given by them to the Government of the United Kingdom on the 3rd April, 1936, and reiterated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome on the 31st December, 1936, to the effect that the Italian Government were fully conscious of their obligations towards the Government of the United Kingdom in the matter of Lake Tsana and had no intention whatever of overlooking or repudiating them."

Further I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government for their part declare that they agree that the assurances given to them in the above Declaration concerning Lake Tsana shall apply equally to the Egyptian Government.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my high consideration.

PERTH.

His Excellency Mustafa El Sadek Bey,  
Egyptian Minister,  
Rome.

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ROME,

16th April, 1938 - XVI.

No. 3517.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding Lake Tsana was signed today by His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and myself as Annex 5 to the Protocol which Lord Perth and I have also signed today:-

"The Italian Government confirm to the Government of the United Kingdom the assurance given by them to the Government of the United Kingdom on the 3rd April, 1936, and reiterated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome on the 31st December, 1936, to the effect that the Italian Government were fully conscious of their obligations towards the Government of the United Kingdom in the matter of Lake Tsana and had no intention whatever of overlooking or repudiating them."

Further I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Italian Government for their part declare that they agree that the assurances given to His Majesty's Government in the above Declaration concerning Lake Tsana shall apply equally to the Egyptian Government.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my high consideration.

CIANO.

His Excellency Mostafa El Sadek Bey,

Egyptian Minister,

ROME.

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16th April, 1938.

Légation

de S.M. le Roi d'Egypte  
à Rome.

No. 35.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Note No. 1/590/38 of today's date which reads as follows:-

"I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding Lake Tsana was signed today by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and myself as Annex 5 to the Protocol which Count Ciano and I have also signed today:-

"The Italian Government confirm to the Government of the United Kingdom the assurances given by them to the Government of the United Kingdom on the 3rd April 1936, and reiterated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome on the 31st December, 1936, to the effect that the Italian Government were fully conscious of their obligations towards the Government of the United Kingdom in the matter of Lake Tsana and had no intention whatever of overlooking or repudiating them".

"Further, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government for their part declare that they agree that the assurances given to them in the above Declaration concerning Lake Tsana shall apply equally to the Egyptian Government."

I.....

His Excellency the Right Honourable  
the Earl of Perth, G.C.M.G., C.B.,  
His Majesty's Ambassador,  
ROME.

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I shall have pleasure in communicating this information to the Egyptian Government.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

MOSTAFA EL SADEK.

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16th April, 1938.303

Légation

de S.M. le Roi d'Egypte

à Rome.

No. 36.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Note No. 3517 of today's date which reads as follows:-

"I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding Lake Tsana was signed today by Lord Perth and myself as Annex 5 to the Protocol which Lord Perth and I have also signed today:

"The Italian Government confirm to the Government of the United Kingdom the assurances given by them to the Government of the United Kingdom on the 3rd of April, 1936, and reiterated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome on the 31st December, 1936, to the effect that the Italian Government were fully conscious of their obligations towards the Government of the United Kingdom in the matter of Lake Tsana and had no intention whatever of overlooking or repudiating them."

"Further, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Italian Government for their part declare that they agree that the assurances given to His Majesty's Government in the above Declaration concerning Lake Tsana apply equally to the Egyptian Government."

I shall have pleasure in communicating this information to the Egyptian Government.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

MOSTAFA EL SADEK.

His Excellency The Count Galeazzo Ciano,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Rome.

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~~Letters~~ <sup>notes</sup> Exchanged between Lord Perth and Count Ciano  
on the one hand and the Egyptian Minister in Rome on the other,  
regarding the Suez Canal Declaration  
(Annex 8 to the Protocol).

The Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Rome,  
16th April, 1938-XVI.

No. 3518.  
(Translation).

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding the Suez Canal was signed today by His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome and myself as Annex 8 to the Protocol which Lord Perth and I have also signed today:

"The Italian Government and the Government of the United Kingdom hereby reaffirm their intention always to respect and abide by the provisions of the Convention signed at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1888, which guarantees at all times and for all Powers the free use of the Suez Canal".

I have the honour to communicate the above Declaration to Your Excellency as the Representative of the territorial Power concerned.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my high consideration,

CIANO.

His Excellency Mostafà El-Sadek Bey,  
Egyptian Minister,  
Rome.

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British Embassy, Rome.

16th April, 1938.

No. 1/590/38.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the following Declaration regarding the Suez Canal was signed today by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and myself as Annex 8 to the Protocol which we have also signed today:-

"The Government of the United Kingdom and the Italian Government hereby reaffirm their intention always to respect and abide by the provisions of the Convention signed at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1888, which guarantees at all times and for all Powers the free use of the Suez Canal".

I have the honour to communicate the above Declaration to Your Excellency as the Representative of the territorial Power concerned.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my high consideration.

PERTH.

His Excellency Mostafà El-Sadek Bey,  
Egyptian Minister,  
Rome.

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Légation

de S.M.le Roi d'Egypte  
à Rome.

16th April, 1938.

No.36.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the Note No.1/590/38 of today's date in which Your Excellency informed me of the Declaration regarding the Suez Canal signed today by Your Excellency and the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs as Annex 8 to the Protocol which Your Excellency and Count Ciano have also signed today.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Egyptian Government, as the territorial Power concerned, take note of the intention of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Italian Government and associate themselves therewith.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

MOSTAFA EL-SADEK.

His Excellency

The Right Honourable

The Earl of Perth, G.C.M.G., C.B.,

His Majesty's Ambassador,

Rome.

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Légation

de S.M. le Roi d'Egypte  
à Rome.

16th April, 1938.

No.35.

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Note No.3518 of today's date in which Your Excellency informed me of the Declaration regarding the Suez Canal signed today by Your Excellency and His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome as Annex 3 to the Protocol which you and Lord Perth have also signed today.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Egyptian Government, as the territorial Power concerned, take note of the intention of the Italian Government and the Government of the United Kingdom and associate themselves therewith.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency the expression of my highest consideration.

MOSTAFÀ EL-SADEK.

His Excellency

The Count Galeazzo Ciano,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Rome.

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The following exchange of telegrams took place immediately on the signature of the Agreement:-

The Prime Minister to Signor Mussolini.

I am delighted to learn from Lord Perth of the successful outcome of the conversations between our two Governments, and I would like to say how much I and my colleagues have appreciated the spirit of good will and co-operation which has been applied to our discussions by Your Excellency, Count Ciano and all concerned upon the Italian side.

It is a matter of sincere satisfaction to me, as I am sure it is also to Your Excellency, that such a comprehensive agreement has been reached between us. I hope that this agreement, when it comes into full operation, will dispose of all outstanding points of difference between us and I confidently expect that thereafter the relations between our two countries will once again be found firmly based on the confidence and friendship which so long existed in the past.

Signor Mussolini to the Prime Minister.

I thank you warmly for your message.

I am indeed glad that Anglo-Italian conversations have so happily ended and that the agreement reached gives you as it does me full satisfaction both as regards its scope and the spirit underlying it. It is a pleasure to me to assure you that I have sincerely appreciated the good will and cordial spirit of understanding which Your Excellency has shown. I have equally appreciated work done by Lord Perth and by all those who have contributed to realization of agreement.

To ...

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To have settled in so frank and full a fashion questions outstanding between us places the relations between England and Italy on a solid and durable basis.

I am convinced that there can now be opened between the two countries a new period of confidence and friendship which is what you and I desire and which accords with our traditional relationship.

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66

J

EGYPT and SUDAN

J 1670  
310  
22 APR 1938

Registry Number } J 1670/38/16.

TELEGRAM FROM  
Sir M. Lapsen, (Cairo).

No. 277 Decypher.

Dated 20th April, 1938.  
Received 22nd April,  
in Registry 1938.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Proposed agreement between Italy and Egypt regarding the Libyan frontier.

During final discussions in regard to Rome conversations, Prime Minister of Egypt once more alluded to question of bon voisinage agreement direct between Egypt and Italy in regard to the Libyan border. Anticipates a revival in practical form of this idea at any moment. There have been press allusions to the matter and the French Minister believes the idea to be well to the fore. Requests instructions. Considers than any action should be taken as soon as possible.

Last Paper.

See within (Minutes.)

References.

See minutes within

JH

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Tel Cairo to 260  
Apr. 23

£. 15 a/h.  
(in 62) W.O.

✓ April 26  
Copies of Putnam 100  
sent to War Office  
+ A.M. on 9/1741

Copies of copies  
sent to Rome on 9/1741

Copy of proposed tel.  
sent to Rome on 9/1741.

(Accomplished.)  
16.5.38.

Next Paper.

J 1741 (1740)

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Minutes.

Please see also Bari broadcast summary for 21 April <sup>311</sup> attached. The suggestion that the Italians & Egyptians are going to "settle" the Libya-Sudan boundary is presumably a mistake. The position is that the Libya-Sudan frontier was defined by the Rome Exchange of notes of the 21 July 1934, by which the Sarra Triangle was ceded to Italy and the tri-junction point between Egypt, Libya & the Sudan was fixed at ~~the~~ Oweinat, thus settling a long dispute which had led to the occupation of the wells at Oweinat by Italian & British forces. There is therefore no need for further discussion about the Sudan-Libya frontier.

As regards the Egypt-Libya frontier, it appears that the Egyptians now suggest a condominium agreement with Italy to cover this border. It is by no means clear what the Egyptians want, and before deciding

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J 1755/1/66  
1934

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Minutes.

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The point raised by the French Government would appear to be of purely academic interest.

By Article 6 of the 1904 Agreement, H.M. Government agreed to adhere to the Constantinople Convention of 1888, with the proviso that the last sentence of <sup>paragraph</sup> Article 1 and the second paragraph of Article 8 of the Convention should remain in abeyance. These two Articles dealt with the application of effective measures to secure the freedom of the Canal, and the insertion of the proviso in the 1904 Agreement was dictated by H.M. Government's special position in Egypt. The French Government now contend that, whereas the British adherence to the 1888 Convention was an obligation undertaken towards all the signatory Powers, the British reservations were only accepted by, and therefore only applicable to, France. The French Government, they contend, therefore acquired a special position with regard to the Canal. They now enquire whether Annex 8 to the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1938, by which H.M. Government and the Italian Government affirm their intention of abiding by the terms of the 1888 Convention, should be regarded as placing Italy in the same position with regard to the Suez Canal as that occupied by France under the 1904 Agreement.

Paragraph 2 of Article 8 of the Suez Canal Convention refers to annual meetings between agents of the signatory Powers in Egypt who are charged with watching over the execution of the Convention. Since this paragraph says that the meetings shall be presided over by a special commissioner, nominated for that purpose by the

Imperial /

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It would have been convenient if the revised copy of Sir I. Malcolm's memorandum on the Suez Canal was available in print. In its present condition it is extremely difficult to read. As, however, I shall want to see this paper <sup>again</sup> before any reply is drafted to the French note, it is possible that by then (at least) a printed proof of this memorandum will be available.

I do not think Mr. Rose has got the position quite right. What the French note says is this. The Suez Canal Convention <sup>was</sup> signed and ratified in 1888, but the signature of Her Britannic Majesty was covered by a reservation so wide that ~~virtually~~ it was doubtful if the convention could be said to be in force at all, or, if it was in force, it was not clear to what extent. I have never seen a precise statement as to what exactly H.M.G. considered the effect of this reservation was (if one is in existence it would be interesting to see it), but in any case it is clear, as one or two passages in Sir I. Malcolm's memorandum show, that other Powers put the widest construction on the reservation and at any rate it was sufficiently wide to prevent the body referred to in Article 6 in the convention from ever meeting at all. (at least I think that was the position, but this too might be ascertained). Then in 1904 in the agreement which established the Entente Cordiale, Article 6, it is recited that "in order to ensure the free passage of the Suez Canal, H.B.M.G. declare that they adhere to the stipulations of the treaty of the 29th October, 1888, and that they agree to their being put into force." Stopping there a minute, this sentence is certainly capable of the interpretation that the effect of our reservation in

1888/

\* proof copy in print annexed.

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for instance, it never occurred so far as I know to us in the late war to justify anything we wanted to do in the Suez Canal by relying on the wide reservation to the Suez Canal Convention which we had made in 1898. If we had wanted to take up this position at that time it would have been no particular difficulty that France had wider rights because she was our ally in the war. The French say that we never consulted or informed any of the other Suez Canal Powers when in 1904 we concluded Article 6 of the Entente Agreement. It would be interesting to know, if the Library can tell us, whether we did make any formal communication to the other Suez Canal Powers about this and whether there is anything contemporaneous ~~with~~ <sup>about</sup> what we thought the position was. In any case we could hardly have maintained this general reservation to the Suez Canal Convention after the signature of the Treaty of Versailles because we signed an article under which the position of the Ottoman Empire under the Suez Canal Convention is transferred to us. I think it is quite clear therefore that the first alternative of this French note is not the right one. What then about their second alternative. I think it is clear that this is wrong anyway. If in an agreement with France we had withdrawn a wide reservation and substituted a narrow one and if this withdrawal of our reservation operated as regards all the signatory Powers, it must clearly operate as regards the other signatory Powers on the same terms as regards France, i.e. with the substitution of the little reservation because the other signatory Powers were placed in the position of either taking something better than the

previous/

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previous position or remaining where they were. By no process that I can think of could they have acquired the withdrawal of our wide reservation without accepting the condition we had made with France, i.e. the substitution of the little one. Subject to what the Library can tell us, I think that is what happened. The other Powers became aware of Article 6 and tacitly at any rate accepted the withdrawal of our wide reservation and the substitution of the little one. No Power ever asked for the yearly convocation of the agents or anything of that kind after 1904. The answer therefore seems to be that the other signatory Powers, by the intention of H.M.G. and their tacit acceptance of the position, acquired the same rights as France did under Article 6, namely, the withdrawal of the wide reservation on condition of accepting the narrow one and that Italy was one of these Powers. All therefore that the Suez Canal declaration in the Rome Protocol does is to give Italy a further assurance that H.M.G. intend to abide by the provisions of the Suez Canal Convention which they are already bound to Italy to comply with. If, however, the first alternative of the French note had been the right one, Italy would have got something which she had not got before because our wide reservation would have been in force as regards Italy and Italy by the terms of the Rome Agreement would have obtained its withdrawal in an undertaking to herself. This point is interesting because it may explain why the Italians wanted this. They may have had it in their minds that we thought we could <sup>consider that</sup> ~~never have got~~ our wide reservation ~~remained~~ except towards France and therefore it still stood so far as they were concerned. Before suggesting the reply to the French note, I should like to see what the

Library/

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Library have to say on some points which I have mentioned above.

*W. B. B. B.*  
16th June, 1938.

Hansard  
4th Series  
Vol. 60,  
Col. 800.  
Vol. 61,  
Col. 667.

With regard to the view taken by His Majesty's Government as to the effect of their reservation about the 1888 Convention, the most precise and authoritative statements I can find are those of Mr. Curzon in the House of Commons on 1st and 12th July 1898. On the first occasion, he stated categorically that the provisions of the Convention had never been brought into operation, while on the second he said, in reply to a question by Mr. Gibson Bowles, that "the Convention in question is certainly in existence, but, as I informed the Honourable Member in reply to a question some days ago, has not been brought into practical operation. This is owing to the reserves made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government by the British delegates at the Suez Canal Commission in 1885, which were renewed by Lord Salisbury and communicated to the Powers in 1887 ....." Mr. Bowles then asked "Do these reserves made in 1887 override the Treaty of 1888?" and Mr. Curzon replied:- "I do not express any definite opinion as to the word 'override', but they are no doubt responsible for the fact as I have already twice stated, that the terms of the convention have not been brought into practical operation."

To Sir E. Monson  
No. 173A  
8th April, 1904  
Conf. 8380.  
pages 118/9.

In this connexion, the following quotation from the despatch to Sir E. Monson commenting on the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 may be of interest, though it is not so categorical/

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categorical as Mr. Curzon's statements:-

"It will be observed that an Article has been  
 "inserted in the Agreement declaring the  
 "adhesion of His Majesty's Government to the  
 "Treaty of the 29th October 1888, providing  
 "for the neutrality of the Suez Canal in time  
 "of war. In consequence of the reservation  
 "made by Lord Salisbury at the time respecting  
 "the special situation of this country during  
 "the occupation of Egypt, some doubt existed  
 "as to the extent to which Great Britain  
 "considered herself bound by the stipulations  
 "of the Convention. It appears desirable to  
 "dissipate any possible misunderstanding by  
 "specifically declaring the adhesion of His  
 "Majesty's Government. It is, however,  
 "provided that certain executive stipulations  
 "which are incompatible with Lord Salisbury's  
 "reservation should remain in abeyance during  
 "the continuance of the occupation".

It is quite clear from these statements that until 1904, the United Kingdom, like the other signatory Powers, regarded the reservation as rendering the Convention inoperative.

Lord Cromer stated on the 17th March 1904 that no meeting of the Agents of the Powers, as contemplated by Article VIII of the Convention, had ever been held and I can find no mention since then of any such meeting.

As regards the other points raised by Mr. Beckett, there is nothing to show that the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 was officially communicated to all the other

Suez/

Lord Cromer  
 No. 39 (Tel.)  
 Confl. 8404 p.329.

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Suez Canal Powers, but it was published at the time (April 1904) and the subsequent discussions with Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia regarding the draft Khedivial decree (about Egyptian finances) annexed to it show that those Governments at least were aware of its terms.

Confl. 8380  
pp.182-3, p.185.

As the price of her consent to the draft Khedivial decree referred to above, Germany demanded certain concessions and the opportunity was taken to secure from her similar assurances as regards Egypt to those secured from France in the Anglo-French Agreement. By this arrangement, embodied in Lord Lansdowne's note to Count Metternich of 15th June 1904 and accepted by Germany on 19th June, Germany definitely agreed to the suspension of the operation of the last sentence of paragraph 1 as well as of paragraph 2 of Article VIII of the Suez Canal Convention.

Confl. 8380  
pp. 197-8.

Similar terms were offered to Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia and were accepted by the two first-named on 23rd and 27th July 1904 respectively. Russia did not take advantage of the offer, having already given her unconditional assent to the draft Khedivial decree, whilst the other Suez Canal Powers, viz., Netherlands, Spain and Turkey, do not seem to have been approached, presumably because they were not interested in the negotiations about the draft financial decree, out of which the Suez Canal assurances arose.

The arrangements referred to above do not seem to have been published or communicated officially to the French Government, but the French Ambassador in

London/



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*Minutes.*

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Canal Convention. Similar terms were offered to Italy and accepted by her on July 23rd, 1904, by Austria-Hungary on July 27th, 1904, whilst Russia had already unconditionally assented to the above mentioned draft Khedivial decree. As regards the other Suez Canal Powers, viz. The Netherlands, Spain and Turkey they do not seem to have been approached, presumably not being interested in the draft financial decree out of which the Suez Canal assurances arose. M. de Charbonnière might at the same time be informed that the late Lord Lansdowne <sup>had</sup> informed the French Ambassador in London (the late M. Paul Cambon) on July 15th, 1904 that negotiations were in progress with Germany and would probably take place with the other Powers concerned in regard to the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904. We might also send him a copy of the answer to a Parliamentary Question given in the House of Commons on the 8th August, 1904 in which the exact scope of the arrangements was indicated.

*V. Camille Rautinck*

29th June, 1938.

*Mr. Beckett.*

I agree as regards the reply to the French Embassy. I think the "hare" raised by the Quai d'Orsay has been rather useful in that it has produced an explanation of the position on an important point about which I think we had not been...

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Minutes.

been clear before, and I think that, as Sir Ian Malcolm's memorandum is still only in proof, we should take advantage of this opportunity to make certain additions and corrections to it. I have put in manuscript on the copy now enclosed the additions and corrections which I should like to see. Even if this means sending it again to Sir Ian Malcolm for his concurrence, and further delay, I think it would be worth while doing so: though the memorandum is very greatly improved, there are still some points where it is vague or misleading.

*W. B. Bockell*  
June 29th, 1938.

Draft to Mr. de Charbonnières.

Mr. Wilson Young

To deal with Sir Ian Malcolm's memo. immediately on his return. *W.B.*

30. vi.

*W.B.*  
1/7

~~W.B. Bockell~~ The memo. is unfortunately beyond proof form and is already in print. ~~Do you think~~ Mr. Bockell therefore thinks it unnecessary to pursue this further. *MR. 14/5.*

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SUEZ CANAL.

CONFIDENTIAL.

February 22, 1938.

SECTION

[J 665/73/16]

Copy No.

*Sir Ian Malcolm to Foreign Office.—(Received February 22.)*

(No. 7. Commercial. Confidential.)

*Paris, February 21, 1938.*

Sir,

SOON after the commencement of hostilities between Italy and Abyssinia in 1935, the question of the "Neutrality of the Suez Canal" was a matter of public debate in Parliament, in the press, and in correspondence with this office. Every variety of opinion was expressed, but there seemed to be very little general knowledge of the history, convention, treaties, &c., governing the main issue of neutrality and free navigation of the Suez Canal in time of war.

To supply that lack of knowledge, I have compiled the memorandum enclosed herein in the hope that, in its present form or in some other, it may prove an informing and acceptable annex to the "Handbook to the History, Constitution and Administration of the Suez Canal Company" (F.O. Confidential 14034).

It will be observed from the bibliography appended to this paper that the material has been drawn from a large number of dependable sources, and I would add that all possible care has been taken to verify every statement that I am now supplying for the use of His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

IAN MALCOLM.

Enclosure.

*Memorandum on the Neutrality of the Suez Canal.*

Year.  
1856

Articles 14 and 15 of the Act of Concession granted by the Viceroy of Egypt to the Suez Canal Company declared the Canal to be neutral:—

ARTICLE 14.

Jan. 5 2nd Act of Concession

"Nous déclarons solennellement, pour nous et nos successeurs, sous la réserve de la ratification par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, le grand Canal maritime de Suez à Péluse et les ports en dépendant, ouverts à toujours, comme passage neutre, à tout navire de commerce traversant d'une mer à l'autre, sans aucune distinction, exclusion ni préférence de personnes ou de nationalités, moyennant le paiement des droits et l'exécution des règlements établis par la Compagnie universelle, concessionnaire pour l'usage dudit Canal et dépendances."

ARTICLE 15.

"En conséquence du principe posé dans l'article précédent, la Compagnie universelle concessionnaire ne pourra, dans aucun cas, accorder à aucun navire, compagnie ou particulier, aucuns avantages ou faveurs qui ne soient accordés à tous autres navires, compagnies ou particuliers, dans les mêmes conditions."

Apr. 4 *De Lesseps' Letters*, Vol. 1, pp. 353 and 362

When the Congress of Paris was convened, M. de Lesseps submitted a project of neutralisation (which M. Thiers had dictated) to the Comte de Buol, for insertion in the Treaty of Paris. It was strongly opposed by Lord Clarendon, who threatened to resign if it were adopted, so it was withdrawn.

9859 [17168]

B

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Year. 1864		
Mar. 3	Resident Director's Archives Confidential Papers, 275 <i>Egypte</i> , Vol. 33, 1864	In a note to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. de Lesseps drafted the bases of a treaty of neutralisation, and suggested an international agreement which should:— (1) Proclaim the complete neutrality of the Canal and freedom of passage for all merchant vessels, regardless of nationality in time of war and peace. (2) Prohibit war vessels from passing through the Canal except with special authorisation of the local Government. (3) Prohibit the company, the Ottoman Government or that of the Viceroy from erecting fortifications at the entrance or exit or along the banks of the Canal. (4) Prohibit vessels passing through the Canal from landing troops except in case of illness, injury or <i>force majeure</i> ; in such cases landing must be preceded or accompanied by authorisation of the local Government.
July 7	...	The foregoing was communicated to the French Ambassador in Constantinople, M. le Marquis de Moustier.
Oct. 25	Confidential Papers, p. 303 Resident Director's Archives	The Turkish Government expressed its entire approval of the proposed agreement in the following words:— "Sa Majesté le Sultan a toujours considéré la neutralité de la nouvelle voie maritime qui doit s'ouvrir à travers le territoire ottoman, comme une condition essentielle," and considered that the arrangement should take the form of an international Act. However, the Porte did not entirely concur in the other suggestions of the French Government, neither did the British Government. The Viceroy expressed anxiety for the postponement of the question of neutralisation of the Canal.
1866		
Feb. 22	<i>State Papers</i> , Vol. 56, p. 277	A convention was concluded between the Viceroy of Egypt and the Canal Company, which made a special reference to the Act of Concession of the 5th January, 1856, and ratified same.
Mar. 19	p. 293	A firman was issued by the Sultan confirming the above-mentioned convention.
1870		
	Resident Director's Archives Memo. on Neutrality, F.O., March 23, 1874 F.O. 78/2170 Admiralty to Under-Sec. for Foreign Affairs	<i>The Franco-Prussian War:</i> The Suez Canal Company made no attempt to prevent the free usage of the Canal to vessels of the belligerent Powers. The presence of French warships at Aden, Suez and Alexandria gave rise to no little anxiety in England, and the Admiralty proposed for Lord Granville's consideration an understanding among the Powers concerning its neutrality. It was agreed that some arrangement should be devised whereby the neutrality of the Canal should be assured in order that commerce and civilisation should never be deprived of its benefits.
1873		
May 14	...	The Tonnage Conference opened in Constantinople.
Dec. 14	...	A declaration was adopted recognising the right of warships and transports of belligerents to transit the Canal; thus admitting that its navigation was under the protection of all European nations, but the declaration did not take into account the complications that might affect merchant vessels in the event of Turkey being at war.
1877		
	Hallberg, <i>The Suez Canal</i> .	<i>The Russo-Turkish War.</i> "The outbreak of war made the question of the protection of the Canal a vital concern. Egypt was part of the Turkish dominions and Russia would have been justified from a legal standpoint in occupying the isthmus for military purposes." Egyptian troops participated in the war and Egyptian vessels carried soldiers and supplies from Egyptian ports to the scene of conflict.
	Resident Director's Archives, and Egypt No. 6, 1877	De Lesseps submitted a plan for neutralisation of the Canal, but Lord Derby rejected it as he considered it was "open to so many objections of a political and practical character that His Majesty's Government could not undertake to recommend it for the acceptance of the Porte and the Powers." Lord Derby did not consider that the neutrality of the Canal was assured by any treaty or international agreement and that the firman of 1866 was merely an agreement between the Turkish Government and the Suez Canal Company.

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3

(and also to Turkey)

Year.  
1877 Russia No. 2,  
1877

The British Government sent a warning to Russia/as they were determined to prevent interference with the navigation of the Canal. Lord Derby stated:—

"Foremost among (British) interests is the necessity of keeping open, uninjured and uninterrupted the communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal. An attempt to blockade or otherwise to interfere with the Canal or its approaches would be regarded . . . as a menace to India and as a grave injury to the commerce of the world," and any such step . . . would be incompatible with the maintenance by Her Majesty's Govt of an attitude of passive neutrality."

Prince Gortchakoff replied:—

"The Imperial Cabinet will neither blockade nor interrupt, nor in any way menace the navigation of the Suez Canal. They consider the Canal as an international work, in which the commerce of the world is interested and which should be kept free from any attack."

~~Neither Turkey nor Russia attempted to interfere with the navigation of the Canal.~~

May 21 Resident  
Director's  
Archives  
Lord Lyons to  
Lord Derby

Lord Derby informed M. de Lesseps <sup>of the warning conveyed to the</sup> that any departure from strict neutrality on the part of either belligerent would involve the hostility of Great Britain. <sup>Russian & Turkish Govts.</sup>

M. de Lesseps "expressed great satisfaction with the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government." He said that the communications made by Her Majesty's Government to the Russian Government, to the Porte and to the Khedive afforded a much more effective security to the Canal than could have been obtained by the arrangement he had proposed.

No attempt was made by Turkey or Russia to infringe or interfere with the navigation of the Canal.

1878 *Revue de Droit  
international  
et de Législa-  
tion comparée*

The Institute of International Law, at a meeting held in Paris in 1878, adopted a resolution:—

"It is to be desired, in the interest of all nations, that the navigation of the Suez Canal be placed by an international act outside of all hostile acts during the war."

1882  
June Resident  
Director's  
Archives  
and Sir Ian  
Malcolm's  
Handbook

*The Arabi Pasha Rebellion.*

The revolt of Arabi Pasha against the Khedive of Egypt placed the Canal in great danger. Much to the disappointment of M. Gambetta, France refused to intervene; Turkey was unwilling to take any steps to suppress the insurrection; a Conference of Ambassadors, held at Constantinople, failed to reach an agreement regarding the restoration of order. De Lesseps, whose confidence in Arabi Pasha was always difficult to comprehend, insisted that the Canal was neutral. During hostilities, therefore, the Canal services were promptly taken over by the British Admiral in command; the inter-oceanic traffic was only interrupted for two days, and on the 21st August Lord Lyons (then Ambassador) received the following telegram from Lord Northbrook:—

"Admiral reports from Port Said that Canal Company have resumed working of Canal. All going smoothly."

Egypt No. 18,  
1882  
1883  
Egypt No. 10,  
1885

This occupation by the navy was based upon a decree of the Khedive, recognising the "military occupation charged to re-establish order in Egypt" and authorising "the occupation of all necessary points."

Lord Granville sent a circular note to the Great Powers, suggesting that the Suez Canal should be put outside the scope of warlike operations and be free for the passage of ships of all nations at all times and "in any circumstances." He suggested:—

- (1) That the Canal should be free for the passage of all ships in any circumstances.
- (2) That in time of war a limitation of time as to ships of war of a belligerent remaining in the Canal should be fixed, and no troops or munitions of war should be disembarked in the Canal.
- (3) That no hostilities should take place in the Canal or its approaches, or elsewhere in the territorial waters of Egypt, even in the event of Turkey being one of the belligerents.
- (4) That neither of the two immediately foregoing conditions (2 and 3) shall apply to measures which may be necessary for the defence of the Canal.

[17168]

B 2

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Year.  
1883

- (5) That any Power whose vessels of war happen to do any damage to the Canal should be bound to bear the cost of the immediate repair.
- (6) That Egypt should take all measures within its power to enforce the conditions imposed on the transit of belligerent vessels through the Canal in time of war.
- (7) That no fortifications should be erected on the Canal or in its vicinity.
- (8) That nothing in the agreement shall be deemed to abridge or affect the territorial rights of the Government of Egypt further than is herein expressly provided.

Lord Cromer's  
*Modern Egypt*,  
Vol. II, p. 384

N.B.—Lord Cromer remarked:—

"Lord Granville was evidently apprehensive lest the mere use of the word 'neutrality' should carry him farther than he intended. With commendable prudence, therefore, he directed that, in dealing with this subject, its use should be avoided, and that the words 'freedom' or 'free navigation' should be substituted in its place."

1884  
Nov. 20 Resident  
Director's  
Archives

In the *Sénat*, M. de Fréycinet reaffirmed the neutrality of the Canal, based on the Act of Concession and the firman of 1866. He declared that any negotiations with England should only regularise the details of the application of these Acts.

1885  
Jan. 17 Egypt No. 4,  
1885

The French Ambassador in London, M. Waddington, proposed calling a conference at Cairo, to make a definite arrangement for the free passage of the Canal.

Lord Granville objected and stated that it was only necessary to draw up an agreement on the lines of his circular note. It was finally agreed, by article III of the Declaration of London of the 17th March, 1885, respecting the finances of Egypt, that a commission (subsequently referred to as the Suez Canal Commission) should meet in Paris to draft a convention on the basis of the note.

The commission met in Paris and was opened by M. Jules Ferry, Prime Minister, but difficulties arose. The British delegates insisted that Lord Granville's circular must be used as a basis of agreement, and that its main provisions should be granted. The French delegates, however, brought a project providing for an international commission to be formed of delegates from those Powers which signed the Declaration of London, with one Turkish and one Egyptian representative, whose duty it would be to secure the protection of the Canal. Minor points were settled, but the fundamental difference regarding methods for securing the protection of the Canal remained.

The Commission adjourned after voting by a majority a draft convention combining the circular note proposals of Lord Granville and the French plan for an international commission. The British delegates (Sir Julian Pauncefote and Sir Charles Rivers Wilson) recorded objections, reservations and amendments to certain articles in this draft and at the close of the commission's sittings formulated a general reservation against the application of any of its provisions which might be incompatible with the existing situation in Egypt and which might fetter the action of Her Majesty's Government during the British occupation of the country.

Although the British delegates had fought the ground "inch by inch" and had made some concessions, they were unable to come terms with their adversaries.

"A few days later, Mr. Gladstone's Ministry fell and the question of neutralising the Canal was again allowed to sleep."

The French Government proposed the resumption of negotiations, but Lord Salisbury replied that the moment was inopportune.

Negotiations continued between Her Majesty's Government and France, but no definite conclusion was reached.

Lord Salisbury sent Sir H. Drummond Wolff to Constantinople on a second mission to bring about an agreement with Turkey for withdrawing British troops from Egypt at the end of three years.

"The question of the free navigation of the Canal formed the subject of negotiation with the result that an article (III) on this point was inserted in the Convention of May 1887 [Anglo-Turkish Convention of the 22nd May, 1887]. Briefly, it may be said that this article embodied the views which had been maintained by the British delegates in Paris in June 1885."

Nov. Lord Cromer,  
*Modern Egypt*,  
Vol. II, p. 386

Egypt No. 1,  
1888

1886

1887

Jan. ...

Lord Cromer,  
*Modern Egypt*,  
Vol. II, p. 386

which consists of...  
of Germany, Austria, Prussia,  
France, Turkey, Egypt,  
Russia, Italy, Spain  
and the Netherlands

\* quote the article  
in footnote

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✱

III. Le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman invitera les Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin à approuver une Convention qui aura pour but de mieux assurer la liberté de la navigation par le Canal de Suez.

Par cette Convention le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman déclarera que ce Canal maritime sera toujours libre et ouvert, en temps de paix comme en temps de guerre, pour les navires de guerre et les bâtiments marchands passant d'une mer à l'autre, sans distinction de pavillon, et payant les droits en se conformant aux Règlements actuellement en vigueur, ou à ceux qui pourraient être promulgués ultérieurement par l'administration compétente.

La Convention stipulera que les Grandes Puissances s'engageront de leur côté à ne point entraver le libre passage du Canal en temps de guerre, et à respecter les biens et établissements qui appartiennent au Canal.

Elle stipulera de même que le Canal ne sera jamais assujéti au blocus, et qu'aucun droit de guerre ou acte d'hostilité ne sera exercé tant dans le Canal que dans un rayon de 5 milles marins à partir des ports de Suez et de Port-Saïd.

Il y sera énoncé également que les Agents Diplomatiques des Puissances Signataires en Egypte surveilleront l'exécution de la Convention toutes les fois qu'il se produirait des circonstances de nature à menacer la sûreté ou la liberté de passage par le Canal; que ces Agents se réuniront lorsqu'ils seront convoqués par l'un d'entre eux sous la présidence du Commissaire spécial nommé à cet effet par la Sublime Porte ou par le Khédive, afin de vérifier et de constater les cas de danger, et en informeront le Gouvernement Egyptien pour qu'il puisse aviser aux moyens propres à assurer la protection et le libre passage du Canal; qu'en tout cas ils se réuniront une fois par an en vue de constater que la Convention a été dûment observée. Il y sera en outre stipulé qu'aucune entrave ne pourra être apportée aux mesures qui seraient nécessaires pour la défense de l'Egypte et la sécurité du Canal; et finalement, que les deux Hautes Parties Contractantes inviteront aussi les autres Gouvernements à adhérer à l'instar des Puissances Signataires à la Convention précitée.

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"A"

"Les Délégués de la Grande-Bretagne, en  
"présentant ce texte de Traité comme le régime  
"définitif destiné à garantir le libre usage du  
"Canal de Suez, pensent qu'il est de leur devoir  
"de formuler une réserve générale quant à  
"l'application de ces dispositions en tant qu'elles  
"ne seraient pas compatibles avec l'état transitoire  
"et exceptionnel où se trouve actuellement l'Egypte,  
"et qu'elles pourraient entraver la liberté d'action  
"de leur Gouvernement pendant la période de  
"l'occupation de l'Egypte par les forces de  
"Sa Majesté Britannique".

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"B" That Her Majesty's Government regarded the Convention as inoperative is shown by the following statements made in the House of Commons by Mr. Curzon on 1st and 12th July 1898:-

(1) "The provisions of the Suez Canal Convention to which the honourable Member refers have never been brought into operation."

(2) "The convention in question is certainly in existence, but, as I informed the honourable Member in reply to a question some days ago, has not been brought into practical operation. This is owing to the reserves made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government by the British delegates at the Suez Canal Commission in 1885, which were renewed by Lord Salisbury, and communicated to the Powers in 1887. They will be found at page 292 of the Parliamentary Paper, Egypt, No.19, 1885."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: "Do these reserves made in 1887 override the Treaty of 1888?"

Mr. CURZON: "I do not express any definite opinion as to the word 'override', but they are no doubt responsible for the fact, as I have already twice stated, that the terms of the convention have not been brought into practical operation."

Year.			
1887			Her Majesty's Government reserved the right of re-entry: "If there are reasons to fear an invasion from without or if order and security in the interior were disturbed."
May to June	Egypt No. 8, 1887		Owing to Her Majesty's Government's "right of re-entry," this convention met with opposition from France and Russia. The Turkish Ministers became alarmed and asked that the time set for ratification be extended.
	Lord Cromer, <i>Modern Egypt</i> , Vol. II, p. 378		As they took no steps to ratify the convention during the time-limit, Sir H. Drummond Wolff left Constantinople in July.
Aug. 19	Egypt No. 1, 1888		Lord Salisbury accepted the French proposal to form a commission of the consular agents of the signatory Powers to watch over the execution of the <del>draft</del> <i>proposed Suez Canal Convention</i> .
Oct. 21	...		Lord Salisbury forwarded to Lord Lytton, Ambassador in Paris, a draft convention based on that produced by the Suez Canal Commission in 1885, but modified so as to meet the objections and reservations to certain articles which had then been recorded by the British delegates. The general reservation made at Paris in 1885 was, however, renewed on this occasion. <i>this reservation was in the following terms:-</i>
Nov. 15	...		The draft, having been accepted by the French Government, was communicated on this date to the other Powers, who were at the same time acquainted with the renewed reservation made by Her Majesty's Government.
1888			
June 11	...		After lengthy discussions with Turkey, who desired certain alterations to the draft, Lord Salisbury informed the French Government that Her Majesty's Government concurred in the terms of the convention "in the amended shape desired by the Porte" and it was then presented by the representatives of England, France and Turkey to the other Powers represented on the Suez Canal Commission <i>which met in Paris in 1885</i> .
July			The convention was formally signed at Constantinople by representatives of Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey and the Netherlands. <sup>(1)</sup>
Oct. 29	...		Ratifications of the convention were exchanged at Constantinople on this date, but the convention remained a dead letter for many years because the signatory Powers apparently regarded the British reservation as rendering it practically inoperative during the British occupation of Egypt and therefore took no steps to appeal to its provisions or to call them into effect.
Dec. 22	...		
1896			
July 15	Lord Salisbury to Lord Dufferin, Paris		The question of the British reservation was raised in conversation between the French Ambassador and Lord Salisbury, who stated that:— "Undue importance had been attached to it by the European Powers, and . . . it was never originally intended by us, and certainly would not be used, for the purpose of jeopardising the neutrality of the Canal; and for the sake of removing all misapprehension on that head, I should be glad if the reserve, which apparently was connected with the disturbances at the time of Arabi, and had lost its importance, could be modified or withdrawn."
1898			
June 25	Hallberg, p. 300, and <i>Foreign Relations</i> , 1898, p. 892		<i>Spanish-American War.</i> Mr. Day, United States Secretary of State, cabled to the United States Ambassador in London, instructing him to inform Lord Salisbury that the United States desired to send warships through the Suez Canal and to find out if the British Government had any objection.
	Admiral Dewey <i>Autobiography</i> , 1913		Lord Salisbury replied that no protests would be made. The Spanish reserve fleet, under Admiral Camara, was ordered to the Philippines, and the United States intended to send Commodore Watson in command of a squadron through the Suez Canal, in pursuit of Admiral Camara.
June 26	...		Admiral Camara arrived at Port Said. He attempted to purchase coal: when this was refused, he tried to ship coal from his own colliers in Egyptian waters and was ordered by the Egyptian Government to depart at once. He transited the Canal, but stayed at Suez until warned to depart; he then left the harbour, but anchored 5 miles off shore, thus well outside the 3-mile limit and free of Egyptian authority. He could have obtained coal in Red Sea ports, where neutrality restrictions were not in force.
June 30			Meanwhile the United States forces had destroyed the Spanish fleet at Santiago, and were free to attack the coast of Spain. Admiral Camara's fleet was ordered to return and re-entered the Canal on the 9th and 10th July, en route for Cartagena.
July 2			
July 5			
July 6			
July 9	...		
July 10			

(1) For text see Annex II.

2 statements in Parliament by Mr. Curzon 9 men in 171 days in 1885

sc. The Anglo-Turkish Convention 1887

fisher's identity?

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what to ms.  
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Year.  
1898

Lord Cromer,  
Egypt No. 1,  
1905

The attitude of the British and Egyptian Governments was explained in 1905 by Lord Cromer:—

"In 1898 neither the British nor the Egyptian Governments recognised that the Suez Canal Convention was in force. The Spanish ships, on arrival at Port Said, received, therefore, treatment which was in accordance with what was believed to be the true principles of international law underlying the practice of port hospitalities."

"Surprise has occasionally been expressed at the different treatment accorded to the Spanish ships during the war between Spain and the United States of America in 1898, and that accorded to the Russian ships (1904). The Anglo-French Agreement of the 8th April, 1904, had entirely changed the situation."

*Russo-Japanese War.*

1904 Feb. to Sept.  
1905

Lord Cromer,  
Egypt No. 1,  
1905

"After war was declared between Russia and Japan instructions were issued to the Egyptian port authorities for their guidance in dealing with the belligerent warships. These instructions were published in the *Official Journal* of the 10th February, 1904, about two months before the Anglo-French Agreement was signed. The negotiations were so far advanced as to render possible this action, and the British and French Governments were fully agreed on the point under discussion."

("These Rules are the outcome of recent telegraphic correspondence with the Earl of Cromer, His Majesty's agent and consul-general at Cairo. They are based upon the provisions of the Suez Canal Convention of the 29th October, 1888. . . .")

1904

*Regulations with regard to Coaling by Belligerent Vessels in the Suez Canal.*

Feb. 12 Sir Charles  
Hardinge to  
British Suez  
Canal  
Directors  
Resident  
Director's  
Archives.

During the continuation of hostilities, no coal should be supplied to warships of either belligerent Power while in the Canal or at any of its ports of access except on the written authorisation of the competent port authorities specifying the amount of coal which may be supplied.

2. Before issuing any authorisation for the supply of coal to any belligerent warship, the port authorities shall obtain a written declaration, duly signed by the officer commanding such warship, of the destination to which he is proceeding and the amount of coal already on board.

3. Such amount of coal may be supplied to a belligerent warship as will enable her, with the coal already on board, to reach the nearest accessible port at which she can obtain the supplies necessary for the continuation of her voyage. This shall not prevent sufficient coal being given at any Canal port to obviate the necessity of the ship coaling at any other port of access to the Canal.

4. Every belligerent warship shall pass through the Suez Canal in the shortest time possible, and without stopping, except in case of necessity, or by order of the Canal authorities.

5. No belligerent warship shall remain in Port Said or the harbour of Suez for more than twenty-four hours, unless she shall not have completed coaling within that period, or except in case of necessity, and every such warship thus compelled to stay shall leave on the earliest opportunity.

6. No warship belonging to one belligerent Power shall leave the Canal or any of its ports of access within twenty-four hours after the departure from such port of a warship of the other belligerent Power.

7. No belligerent Power shall embark or disembark any troop, arms, ammunition or warlike stores, supplies or equipment in the Suez Canal or any of its ports of access; save and except that, in case of an accidental block in the Suez Canal, any body of troops, not exceeding 1,000 in number at one time, may be disembarked at either Suez or Port Said until the block is removed.

8. For the purpose of these instructions the word "warships" shall include every vessel, whether armed or not, which is employed by a belligerent Power as a transport or fleet auxiliary, or in any other way for the purpose of hostilities, whether by land or sea, but shall not include a vessel fitted up and used exclusively as a hospital ship.

N.B.—With regard to Egyptian ports—other than those in, or of access to, the Canal—such, e.g., as Alexandria and Suakin, it has been suggested to the Egyptian Government that the English rules should, in principle, be applied.

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To  
 Sir E. Monson of 8th April 1904 transmitting a copy of this  
 p. 173A  
 onfl. 8380  
 ages 118-9.

Lord Lansdowne in a despatch to Sir E. Monson  
 agreement commented up Article VI as follows:-

"It will be observed that an Article has  
 "been inserted in the Agreement declaring  
 "the adhesion of His Majesty's Government to  
 "the Treaty of the 29th October, 1888, pro-  
 "viding for the neutrality of the Suez Canal  
 "in time of war. In consequence of the  
 "reservation made by Lord Salisbury at the  
 "time respecting the special situation of  
 "this country during the occupation of  
 "Egypt, some doubt existed as to the extent  
 "to which Great Britain considered herself  
 "bound by the stipulations of the Convention.  
 "It appears desirable to dissipate any  
 "possible misunderstanding by specifically  
 "declaring the adhesion of His Majesty's  
 "Government. It is, however, provided  
 "that certain executive stipulations which  
 "are incompatible with Lord Salisbury's  
 "reservation should remain in abeyance during  
 "the continuance of the occupation".

*The substance of Article VI of the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 was communicated to the Russian Govt. which raised no objection but did not specifically accept it. The Netherlands, Spain and Turkey were not specifically approached with regard to the*

Year.  
1904 Lord Cromer,  
Egypt No. 1,  
1905

"The question then naturally arose as to what port should, in the terms of the Egyptian instructions, be considered the 'nearest accessible port at which a belligerent ship of war can obtain supplies necessary for the continuation of her voyage.' The question was of special importance as regards ships proceeding in a southerly direction. It was decided that sufficient coal should be given to take the ship to Aden."

"... At the request of the Russian Government, special measures of protection were adopted by the Egyptian Government while the Russian fleet was passing through the Canal. Further, an Egyptian vessel patrolled each coast of the Gulf of Suez. It was decided that the whole of the Gulf of Suez should not be considered as Egyptian territorial waters. Egyptian responsibility was limited to 3 miles from the coast on either side."

1904  
April 8 Egypt No. 1,  
1905

Anglo-French Agreement Signed.

Article VI of that agreement reads as follows:—

"In order to insure the free passage of the Suez Canal, His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they adhere to the stipulations of the Treaty of the 29th October, 1888, and that they agree to their being put in force. The free passage of the Canal being thus guaranteed, the execution of the last sentence of paragraph 1, as well as of paragraph 2 of article VIII of that treaty will remain in abeyance."

The two paragraphs mentioned above as to "remain in abeyance" are:—

- (1) "Under any circumstances they (the Consular Agents in Egypt) shall meet once a year to take note of the due execution of the treaty."
- (2) "The last-mentioned meetings should take place under the presidency of a special commissioner nominated for that purpose by the Imperial Ottoman Government. A commissioner of the Khedive may also take part in the meeting, and may preside over it in case of the absence of the Ottoman commissioner."

Egypt No. 1,  
1905, p. 11,

Lord Cromer commented:—

"Not only, therefore, was the Suez Canal Convention in force when the Russian fleet passed through the Canal—thus materially altering the situation which existed in 1898 (Spanish-American war)—but the exclusion of those portions of the convention which, under the agreement of the 8th April, 1904, 'remain in abeyance,' would appear to lay an enhanced degree of responsibility on the Egyptian Government—and, therefore necessarily on the British Government, whose troops are in occupation of Egypt—for the enforcement, with the strictest impartiality, of the terms of the convention."

Germany agreed to the British stipulations concerning article VIII of the Suez Canal Convention. Similar declarations were signed by Russia, Italy and Austria-Hungary. Italy (6-23 July 1904) and Austria-Hungary (16-12 July 1904).

The attitude of His Majesty's Government was severely tested in the Russo-Japanese war, as the political situation with regard to Russia was strained and Japan was an ally.

One of the Russian vessels disregarded the convention of 1888. After obtaining coal at Port Said in order to return to Russia, it then overhauled neutral ships near the entrance to the Canal, thus "violating the neutrality of Egypt in a gross and open manner."

According to article IV of the convention:—

"No act of hostility, nor any act having for its object to obstruct the free navigation of the Canal, shall be committed in the Canal and in its ports of access as well as within a radius of 3 marine miles from these ports, even though the Ottoman Empire should be one of the belligerent Powers."

1906  
Egypt No. 1,  
1906

Sinai Frontier.

A sharp crisis followed the termination of the Algeiras Conference in January 1906. On the basis of a firman addressed by the Sultan to Abbas II in 1892, which contained a clause rectifying the Sinai frontier in favour of Turkey, Taba was occupied and the Sultan demanded that

*... the British Government should undertake to maintain the status quo in the Sinai Peninsula. This was refused. The British Government was not prepared to undertake such a responsibility. The matter was referred to the Council of the League of Nations. The Council decided that the British Government should maintain the status quo in the Sinai Peninsula. This was accepted by the British Government.*

(Contd.)

*By note exchanged between Lord Cromer and Count de Serey on 13th May 1904 Germany agreed that the execution of the last sentence of para 1 of the Convention of 1888 as well as of para 2 of article VIII of the Convention of 1888 should remain in abeyance.*

June 19 Egypt No. 1,  
1905

Article VIII of the Convention of 1888

Hallberg, The Suez Canal

International Law and Diplomacy

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Year.		
1906		Egyptian troops be withdrawn from certain places in the Sinai Peninsula and from the island of Tiran in the Gulf of Akaba. In April the Porte wished the Egyptian frontier to be traced from Rafah to Suez, thus menacing the security of the Suez Canal and the liberty of Egypt; it was also reported that strategic railways would be constructed. His Majesty's Government demanded the withdrawal of Turkish troops and the abandonment of the railway scheme. A powerful squadron was sent to Egyptian waters, Turkey gave way and an agreement was signed on the 1st October, 1906.
1911		<i>Italo-Turkish War.</i> Italian warships passed through the Suez Canal without any incidents.
1914		<i>The Great War.</i>
Aug. 5	<i>Libre Usage du Canal de Suez et sa Neutralité. Bahon, 1936</i>	At the commencement of the Great War in August 1914 several German ships intended to transit the Canal, but were warned by the Egyptian Government, authorised by His Majesty's Government, that they would not be allowed to leave Port Said. The <i>Agent Supérieur</i> of the company declared to the local authorities that the Suez Canal Company could not prohibit transit and reported the incidents to the Paris head office, which communicated with the British Embassy. The Ambassador explained that the attitude taken by Egypt was due to the fact that German ships had used their wireless to communicate information regarding the arrival and departure of several English vessels to German warships; this was equivalent to an act of hostility committed in the Canal waters and was violating article IV of the convention. The Egyptian Government, therefore, exercising their rights under article IX of the said convention, had taken the necessary measures to detain the ships and remove their wireless. The Egyptian Government issued a proclamation providing for the removal of enemy vessels from the Canal zone, and granting British naval and military authorities the rights of war in Egyptian ports and territory.
Aug. 17	<i>ditto</i>	A German cargo ship stationed at Port Said since the beginning of August paid dues and asked for a pilot. The <i>commandant</i> of Port Said, the British vice-consul and the French consul informed the company that they had good reason to believe the Germans had planned to sink the ship in order to obstruct the Canal. The company stated that, in the absence of sufficient proof, they could not refuse the services of a pilot, who was sent on board. He found the gangway occupied by soldiers and was told the captain had been forced to land.
Sept.	<i>ditto</i>	In September Indian troops arrived. Part of this force transited the Canal without landing in Egypt; the remainder, who were intended as reinforcements for the troops in occupation, landed at Suez, not in the company's port—Port Tewfik—but at Port Ibrahim, situated <i>outside</i> the limits of the concession and depending exclusively on the Egyptian Government, being on the same basis as Alexandria.
	<i>ditto</i>	In the above cases, care was taken to carry out the principles established by the Act of Concession and the International Convention of 1888.
Sept. 30	<i>ditto</i>	All enemy vessels were taken outside the 3-mile limit, captured by a British cruiser and brought to the Prize Court at Alexandria.
Oct. 23	<i>State Papers, Vol. 108, p. 154</i>	The following orders were issued by His Majesty's Government:— "Since the outbreak of war, certain ships of enemy countries have remained in the Suez Canal. "Some of these vessels were detained by the Egyptian Government on account of hostile acts committed in the Canal; some because there was reason to apprehend that they contemplated hostile acts; others, perfectly free, have refused to leave the Canal in spite of the offer to a free pass, thus disclosing their intention to use the ports of the Canal merely as ports of refuge, a measure which is not contemplated by the Suez Canal Convention. "His Majesty's Government did not admit the conventional right of free access to and use of the Canal and its ports of access for an indefinite time to escape capture, since the obvious result of permitting any such course must be to greatly inconvenience and even to block the use of the ports of and the Canal by other ships, and they are consequently of opinion that the Egyptian Government are fully justified in the steps which they are taking to remove from the
	<i>ditto</i>	

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9

Year.  
1914

Canal all enemy ships which have been long enough in the Canal ports to show clearly that they have no intention of departing in the ordinary way, and that they are putting the Canal and its ports to a use which is inconsistent with the use of the Canal in the ordinary way by other shipping."

Nov. 5 ...  
Dec. 18 ...

England declared war on Turkey.  
Turkish suzerainty over Egypt was declared at an end and a British protectorate proclaimed.

1915

Jan. *Libre Usage  
du Canal de  
Suez et sa  
Neutralité.  
Bahon, 1936*

In January 1915 a Germano-Turkish attack on the Canal was certain and, according to article IX of the 1888 Convention, the local authorities had to organise without delay the defence of the Canal. . . . The company assisted the authorities charged with the defence of the Canal and put their material at their disposal whenever requested. The Anglo-Egyptian authorities and the representatives of the company collaborated constantly and endeavoured to combine the necessary measures for defence with the liberty of navigation in the Canal.

Feb. *Military  
Operations.  
Egypt and  
Palestine,  
Vol. 1*

By February there were 70,000 British troops in Egypt, but not all were available for the defence of the Canal. . . . The Canal Defence Force included 24 battalions of infantry, a camel corps, a mountain brigade, 12 mountain guns, a detachment of the Royal Flying Corps and a squadron of French seaplanes.

Feb. ...

In addition to the land forces, several British and French warships entered the Canal and British destroyers cruised between the banks.

Feb. 3 ...

The attack started on the 3rd February and failed, thanks to the combined efforts of the Anglo-Egyptian troops, British and French airmen and warships. However, three Turkish pontoons managed to cross the Canal at night, but were attacked and taken prisoners.

Navigation was only interrupted for one day, the 3rd February.

After the Germano-Turkish retreat, the allied and neutral ships continued to use the Canal. Ships passed in convoys, night passage was suppressed, and constant supervision was exercised along the banks to prevent the laying of mines.

1919

June 28 ...

*Treaty of Versailles.*

Article 152(\*) of the treaty transferred:—

"To His Britannic Majesty's Government the powers conferred on His Imperial Majesty the Sultan by the convention signed at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1888, relating to the free navigation of the Suez Canal."

Article 282:—

"From the coming into force of the present treaty and subject to the provisions thereof of the multilateral treaties, conventions and agreements of an economic or technical character enumerated below, and in the subsequent articles, shall alone be applied as between Germany and those of the Allied and Associated Powers party thereto . . . ."

No. 11. Convention of the 29th October, 1888, regarding the establishment of a definite arrangement guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal.

1920

*Treaty of Sèvres.*

Article 109. The Turkish Government acknowledged the British protectorate over Egypt.

1922

Feb. 28

His Majesty's Government abandoned the British protectorate over Egypt and proclaimed its independence, subject to four reservations, one of these being the defence of the Suez Canal:—

"(a) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt."

1923

July 24

*Treaty of Lausanne.*

Article 17 stipulated that Turkey had forfeited, by acceptance of this article, its original rights under the convention of 1888.

(See articles 8 and 9 of the convention.)

(\*) Similar articles accepted by Austria (article 107 of Treaty of Saint-Germain); Hungary (article 91, Treaty of Trianon); Turkey (article 90, Treaty of Lausanne).

[17168]

C

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## Annex II.

*Convention between Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia and Turkey, respecting the free Navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal.*

*Signed at Constantinople, October 29, 1888.*

*[Ratifications deposited at Constantinople, December 22, 1888.]*

(Translation.)

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India; His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia; His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and Apostolic King of Hungary; His Majesty the King of Spain, and in his name the Queen Regent of the Kingdom; the President of the French Republic; His Majesty the King of Italy; His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, &c.; His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias; and His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans; wishing to establish, by a Conventional Act, a definite system destined to guarantee at all times, and for all the Powers, the free use of the Suez Maritime Canal, and thus to complete the system under which the navigation of this Canal has been placed by the Firman of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, dated the 22nd February, 1866 (2 Zilkadé 1282), and sanctioning the Concessions of His Highness the Khedive, have named as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:—

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, the Right Honourable Sir William Arthur White, her Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, M. Joseph de Radowitz, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and Apostolic King of Hungary, M. Henri, Baron de Calice, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

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His Majesty the King of Spain, and in his name the Queen Regent of the Kingdom, Don Miguel Florez y Garcia, his Chargé d'Affaires;

The President of the French Republic, M. Gustave Louis Lannes, Count de Montebello, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France;

His Majesty the King of Italy, M. Albert, Baron Blanc, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, &c., M. Gustave Keun, his Chargé d'Affaires

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, M. Alexandre de Nélidow, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, Mehemmet Said Pasha, his Minister for Foreign Affairs;

Who, having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following Articles:—

#### ARTICLE I.

The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag.

Consequently, the High Contracting Parties agree not in any way to interfere with the free use of the Canal, in time of war as in time of peace.

The Canal shall never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

#### ARTICLE II.

The High Contracting Parties, recognising that the Fresh-Water Canal is indispensable to the Maritime Canal, take note of the engagements of His Highness the Khedive towards the Universal Suez Canal Company as regards the Fresh-Water Canal; which engagements are stipulated in a Convention bearing date the 18th March, 1863, containing an *exposé* and four Articles.

They undertake not to interfere in any way with the security of that Canal and its branches, the working of which shall not be exposed to any attempt at obstruction.

#### ARTICLE III.

The High Contracting Parties likewise undertake to respect the plant, establishments, buildings, and works of the Maritime Canal and of the Fresh-Water Canal.

#### ARTICLE IV.

The Maritime Canal remaining open in time of war as a free passage, even to the ships of war of belligerents, according to the terms of Article I of the present Treaty, the High Contracting Parties agree that no right of war, no act of hostility, nor any act having for its object to obstruct the free navigation of the Canal, shall be committed in the Canal and its ports of access, as well as within a radius of 3 marine miles from those ports, even though the Ottoman Empire should be one of the belligerent Powers.

Vessels of war of belligerents shall not revictual or take in stores in the Canal and its ports of access, except in so far as may be strictly necessary. The transit of the aforesaid vessels through the Canal shall be effected with the least possible delay, in accordance with the Regulations in force, and without any other intermission than that resulting from the necessities of the service.

Their stay at Port Said and in the roadstead of Suez shall not exceed twenty-four hours, except in case of distress. In such case they shall be bound to leave as soon as possible. An interval of twenty-four hours shall always elapse between the sailing of a belligerent ship from one of the ports of access and the departure of a ship belonging to the hostile Power.

#### ARTICLE V.

In time of war belligerent Powers shall not disembark nor embark within the Canal and its ports of access either troops, munitions, or materials of war. But in case of an accidental hindrance in the Canal, men may be embarked or disembarked at the ports of access by detachments not exceeding 1,000 men, with a corresponding amount of war material.

#### ARTICLE VI.

Prizes shall be subjected, in all respects, to the same rules as the vessels of war of belligerents.

#### ARTICLE VII.

The Powers shall not keep any vessels of war in the waters of the Canal (including Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes).

Nevertheless, they may station vessels of war in the ports of access of Port Said and Suez, the number of which shall not exceed two for each Power.

This right shall not be exercised by belligerents.

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## ARTICLE VIII.

The Agents in Egypt of the Signatory Powers of the present Treaty shall be charged to watch over its execution. In case of any event threatening the security or the free passage of the Canal, they shall meet on the summons of three of their number under the presidency of their Doyen, in order to proceed to the necessary verifications. They shall inform the Khedivial Government of the danger which they may have perceived, in order that that Government may take proper steps to insure the protection and the free use of the Canal. Under any circumstances, they shall meet once a year to take note of the due execution of the Treaty.

The last-mentioned meetings shall take place under the presidency of a Special Commissioner nominated for that purpose by the Imperial Ottoman Government. A Commissioner of the Khedive may also take part in the meeting, and may preside over it in case of the absence of the Ottoman Commissioner.

They shall especially demand the suppression of any work or the dispersal of any assemblage on either bank of the Canal, the object or effect of which might be to interfere with the liberty and the entire security of the navigation.

## ARTICLE IX.

The Egyptian Government shall, within the limits of its powers resulting from the Firmans, and under the conditions provided for in the present Treaty, take the necessary measures for insuring the execution of the said Treaty.

In case the Egyptian Government should not have sufficient means at its disposal, it shall call upon the Imperial Ottoman Government, which shall take the necessary measures to respond to such appeal; shall give notice thereof to the Signatory Powers of the Declaration of London of the 17th March, 1885; and shall, if necessary, concert with them on the subject.

The provisions of Articles IV, V, VII, and VIII shall not interfere with the measures which shall be taken in virtue of the present Article.

## ARTICLE X.

Similarly, the provisions of Articles IV, V, VII, and VIII shall not interfere with the measures which His Majesty the Sultan and His Highness the Khedive, in the name of His Imperial Majesty, and within the limits of the Firmans granted, might find it necessary to take for securing by their own forces the defence of Egypt and the maintenance of public order.

In case His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, or His Highness the Khedive, should find it necessary to avail themselves of the exceptions for which this Article provides, the Signatory Powers of the Declaration of London shall be notified thereof by the Imperial Ottoman Government.

It is likewise understood that the provisions of the four Articles aforesaid shall in no case occasion any obstacle to the measures which the Imperial Ottoman Government may think it necessary to take in order to insure by its own forces the defence of its other possessions situated on the eastern coast of the Red Sea.

## ARTICLE XI.

The measures which shall be taken in the cases provided for by Articles IX and X of the present Treaty shall not interfere with the free use of the Canal. In the same cases, the erection of permanent fortifications contrary to the provisions of Article VIII is prohibited.

## ARTICLE XII.

The High Contracting Parties, by application of the principle of equality as regards the free use of the Canal, a principle which forms one of the bases of the present Treaty, agree that none of them shall endeavour to obtain with respect to the Canal territorial or commercial advantages or privileges in any international arrangements which may be concluded. Moreover, the rights of Turkey as the territorial Power are reserved.

## ARTICLE XIII.

With the exception of the obligations expressly provided by the clauses of the present Treaty, the sovereign rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and the rights and immunities of His Highness the Khedive, resulting from the Firmans, are in no way affected.

## ARTICLE XIV.

The High Contracting Parties agree that the engagements resulting from the present Treaty shall not be limited by the duration of the Acts of Concession of the Universal Suez Canal Company.

## ARTICLE XV.

The stipulations of the present Treaty shall not interfere with the sanitary measures in force in Egypt.

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## ARTICLE XVI.

The High Contracting Parties undertake to bring the present Treaty to the knowledge of the States which have not signed it, inviting them to accede to it.

## ARTICLE XVII.

The present Treaty shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Constantinople, within the space of one month, or sooner if possible.

In faith of which the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty, and have affixed to it the seal of their arms.

Done at Constantinople, the 29th day of the month of October, in the year 1888.

(L.S.)	W. A. WHITE.
(L.S.)	RADOWITZ.
(L.S.)	CALICE.
(L.S.)	MIGUEL FLOREZ Y GARCIA.
(L.S.)	G. DE MONTEBELLO.
(L.S.)	A. BLANC.
(L.S.)	GUS. KEUN.
(L.S.)	NÉLIDOW.
(L.S.)	M. SAÏD.

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J. 2294

45

JUN 1933

Lorsque la Grande-Bretagne a signé la Convention du 29 octobre 1888 sur le Canal de Suez, elle a déclaré qu'elle se considérait comme liée seulement dans la mesure où les obligations souscrites par elle n'entraveraient pas sa liberté d'action en Egypte. Elle n'a levé cette réserve, qui annulait pratiquement les garanties énoncées dans la Convention, que par la déclaration franco-anglaise du 8 avril 1904. Mais l'article 6 de cette dernière, en même temps qu'il stipule cette renonciation, enregistre l'acquiescement de la France à la suspension des dispositions qui, dans l'article 8 de l'Acte de Constantinople, associent les parties à la surveillance de l'exécution des engagements pris. Autrement dit, la Grande-Bretagne reconnaissait que les clauses de la Convention lui étaient désormais opposables, hormis celle qui fonde les signataires à intervenir dans l'application effective.

Il ne semble pas que le gouvernement britannique se soit jamais soucié de rallier à cet arrangement l'assentiment des autres puissances

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2.

en cause, ce qui s'explique sans doute par le fait que la Grande-Bretagne et la France pouvaient être considérées comme bénéficiant pratiquement seules en Egypte d'une situation privilégiée. Cependant, si l'abandon par le gouvernement de Londres de la réserve générale qu'il avait précédemment formulée ne pouvait se concevoir qu'avec la valeur d'un engagement erga omnes, la suspension de certaines des attributions définies dans l'article 8 ne liait juridiquement que la France.

Le gouvernement français se demande si l'annexe 8 au Protocole signé à Rome le 16 avril dernier, et par laquelle les gouvernements britannique et italien ont confirmé leur adhésion à la Convention du 29 octobre 1888, n'a pas eu pour objet d'assurer à l'Italie une situation équivalente à celle résultant pour la France de la déclaration de 1904 et si, par conséquent, l'exécution des dispositions visées par l'article 3 de cette

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47 3.

déclaration est et reste également suspendue  
à l'égard de l'Italie.

L'Ambassadeur de France serait  
très reconnaissant au Foreign Office de bien  
vouloir le mettre en mesure de fournir à son  
gouvernement les éclaircissements que ce dernier  
désirerait recevoir à ce sujet./.

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OUT FILE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

4th July, 1938.

No. J 2294/38/16.

*Dear de Charbonnière*

You may remember that on the evening of the 2nd June you left a little aide mémoire with me regarding the Anglo-Italian declaration of the 16th April, 1938, by which the governments of both countries re-affirmed their determination to abide by the terms of the Suez Canal Convention of the 29th October, 1888. The questions raised in that aide mémoire have been examined and we find that correspondence took place with a number of the signatories of the Suez Canal Convention as the result of the Anglo-French declaration of the 8th April, 1904.

Whilst there is nothing to show that the above-mentioned declaration was communicated officially to the other signatories of the Suez Canal Convention, nevertheless/

Monsieur Guy de Girard de Charbonnière.  
French Embassy.

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nevertheless it was published in April 1904 and the subsequent discussions with the German, Italian, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Governments regarding the draft Khedivial decree respecting Egyptian finances annexed to the declaration, show that those governments were at least aware of its terms.

As the price of their consent to the above-mentioned draft Khedivial decree, the German Government demanded certain concessions and the opportunity was taken to secure from them similar assurances as regards Egypt to those given by the French Government in the Anglo-French declaration of 1904. By this arrangement Germany definitely agreed to the suspension of the operation of the last sentence of paragraph 1 as well as of paragraph 2 of Article 8 of the Suez Canal Convention.

Similar terms were offered to the Italian, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Governments and were accepted by the two first named on the 23rd July and 27th July, 1904, respectively. The Russian Government did not take advantage of the offer having already  
given/

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given their unconditional assent to the draft Khedivial decree regarding Egyptian finances whilst the other Powers signatories to the Suez Canal Convention, viz., the Netherlands, Spain and Turkey, do not seem to have been approached as they were presumably not interested in the draft financial decree.

We find that the late Lord Lansdowne, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, told the late M. Paul Cambon, French Ambassador here, on the 18th July, 1904, that negotiations were in progress with Germany and would probably take place with the other Powers concerned in regard to the stipulations respecting Egypt in the Anglo-French declaration of 1904. I would add that the Duc d'Orsay were probably acquainted with the nature of these arrangements as the exact scope thereof was indicated in the House of Commons on the 8th August, 1904, in a reply to a Parliamentary Question, of which I enclose a copy for convenience of reference.

*Yours very sincerely*

(Sd.) V. CAVENDISH BENTINCK

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J

J 2440  
56  
20 JUN 1938

Registry Number } J 2440/38/16.  
FROM Sir M. Lampson,  
(Cairo).  
No. 688 (96/13/38).  
Dated 11th June, 1938.  
Received 20th June,  
in Registry } 1938.  
J: Egypt and Sudan.

Proposed agreement between Egypt and Italy.  
Refers to Cairo telegram No. 75 Saving of 23rd May 1938 (J. 2144/38/16).  
At an interview which the Prime Minister gave to journalists on 8th June, 1938, the Prime Minister stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not yet approached the Italian Government on the subject of the possibility of Italo-Egyptian negotiations, considering that any such action should take place after the Franco-Italian talks. He went on to affirm that the interests of Egypt would be safeguarded, and that the question of the Coptic Church in Ethiopia would be considered in any negotiations which might take place.

Last Paper.  
(J 2440) J 2327  
References.  
J 1823/112/1  
(Coptic Church in Ethiopia)  
(Print.)

(Minutes.)  
*This is all very indefinite.*  
*Sanjour 27/11/38*  
*2/6*

(How disposed of.)  
  
(Action completed.)  
SP.  
11.7.38  
(Index.)  
19  
M

If the Italo-Egyptian negotiations are to take place after the Franco-Italian talks, they are likely to be postponed for a long while! I cannot understand why the Egyptian Govt. should wish the Franco-Italian talks to finish before they embark on their negotiations with the Italians. Perhaps they fear that these negotiations will lead them into complications and trouble and therefore wish to put them off as long as possible. - Y. Cavendish  
I suspect it is a sonorous excuse. The Egyptians don't really know what to ask for and fear traps. The original idea of reimbursement exploited against Naku by Sikky is a little less actual since our Rome 'accord'.  
2/6  
20.2.1938

Next Paper.  
(J 2623)

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No. 688.  
(96/13/38)

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
CAIRO.

11th June, 1938.

My Lord,

With reference to correspondence leading up to my telegram No. 75 Saving of May 23rd, I have the honour to report that at an interview which the Prime Minister gave to a number of journalists on Wednesday, June 8th, the subject of the possibility of negotiations between the Egyptian and Italian Governments was touched upon.


2. According to the press, the Prime Minister stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not, as yet, approached the Italian Government on this subject, considering that any such action should take place after the Franco-Italian talks. Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha went on to affirm that the interests of Egypt would be safeguarded and that the question of the Coptic Church in Abyssinia would be considered in any negotiations which might take place.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant.

  
AMBASSADOR.

The Right Honourable  
Viscount Halifax, K.G.,  
P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
&c., &c., &c.



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should help considerably. Little the Tug  
 or Sir I. Malcolm should be able to  
 give us a rough idea of the Italian  
 holding. At the same time to reinforce  
 this argument. The library would perhaps  
 be entitled to the circumstances in which  
 the Dutch director was elected in 1884.

I print and copy Tug.  
 B. & T.  
 Adm. G.

~~Mr. Beckett.~~

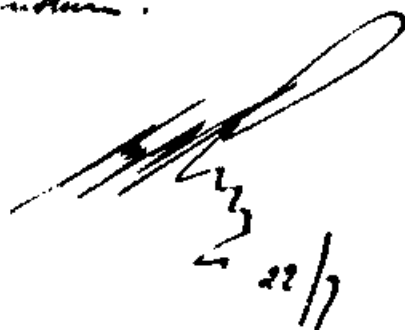
P. L. Rose  
 18/7.

In the first instance it would be  
 helpful to learn in what circumstances  
 the Dutch Director was elected to the Board  
 of the Suez Canal Co. in 1884.

Library.

V. Commandant Jentink  
 19/VIII.

I attach a memorandum.

  
 22/7

The Italian Government have not made any move since  
 1920 for the appointment of an Italian director to the  
 Board of the Suez Canal Company, but Italian shipping  
 interests, in particular Signor Cosulich, have <sup>recently</sup> approached  
 British shipping interests in this connexion, ~~and~~ After  
~~the~~ British member of the Board of the Suez Canal Company  
 who was thus approached had consulted the Marquis de  
 Vogüé, chairman of the Suez Canal Company, <sup>he told</sup> Signor  
 Cosulich ~~was informed~~ that the present was not an  
 opportune...

File Number

J 38

EGYPTIAN

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Minutes.

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opportune time for seeking to secure the election of an Italian national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company. I think that we can rely on the French obstructing the election of an Italian to the Board of the Company, but I expect that the Italian Government may put forward a demand for representation later on which it will be somewhat difficult to resist as it would appear that, in the past, the amount of a country's shipping passing through the Canal was taken into consideration in connexion with the election of Belgian <sup>and</sup> German directors to the Board of the Company. In order that we may have all the material to deal with an Italian request for support for the election of an Italian national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company if and when the Italian Government put forward such a request, I think that we might send a copy of this despatch to Sir Ian Malcolm asking him to furnish us with information regarding the extent to which the Italian Government or Italian nationals hold debentures or shares in the Suez Canal Company. Draft submitted herewith.

V. Commaire *[Signature]*

23rd July, 1938.

*[Handwritten notes:]*  
 (I wrote most of this despatch as a minute in April!)  
 Fortunately it never seems to have been laid down that shipping percentages should be represented by directors, and as pointed out

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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Minutes.

in the despatch we could  
claim an enormous increase  
in directors on this basis - or  
on that of shareholding.  
I believe it would be a very  
serious danger to have an  
Italian on the Board, (or a  
German), for the reasons  
indicated in the despatch (para 5.)  
DVK  
26/1

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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[J 2714/38/16/1938]

62

Netherlands representation on the Board of  
the Suez Canal Company.

Confl. 14034  
pp. 71-72

British  
Directors'  
despatch No. 23  
Political of  
March 14, 1884  
F.O. 78,  
Vol. 3720

F.O. 78  
Vol. 3723

When the Suez Canal Company was first formed, Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps invited a number of his friends and collaborators, irrespective of nationality, to join the Board. As time went on the non-French directors were replaced until the Board consisted of twenty-one directors exclusively French. After the purchase of shares by Her Majesty's Government in 1875, three British directors were added to the Board, which in 1884 was increased to a membership of thirty-two, of whom an additional seven were to be British. While the last proposal was under discussion, however, vacancies occurred owing to the deaths of two French directors. At a meeting of the Council of Administration held on March 13, 1884 to consider the action to be taken in the light of the hostile attitude of shareholders to the new proposals, one of the French directors suggested that there was but small probability of the requisite majority in favour of the introduction of the seven new British members and advanced the proposal that the two vacancies should be filled by British representatives; other members however doubted the wisdom of running counter to the shareholders even to this extent, and discussion of the question was postponed. Eventually the report submitted by M. de Lesseps to the shareholders at the general meeting held at Paris on May 29, 1884 (enclosed in Paris despatch No. 300 of May 24, 1884) recorded the deaths of the two French directors and submitted for the approval of the shareholders the names of another French citizen and of Monsieur Anslyn, formerly

Netherlands/

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Netherlands Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

Monsieur Anslyn was duly accepted at the general meeting as a director, and the reports from the British Directors and the representative of Her Majesty's Government who attended the meeting make no mention of any discussion on the point of his nationality.

2. The Foreign Office archives of the period contain nothing to show that a Netherlands subject was selected for any particular reason, and there is nothing to indicate whether at the time his appointment was regarded as personal to himself or whether it was a concession to Netherlands shipping interests. Sir Ian Malcolm in his despatch No. 30 Commercial of July 3, 1922 merely states in this connexion that "..... at various dates, and in the best interests of the company, the French ceded places to a Belgian, a Dutch and a German representative"; while the memorandum by the Secretary-General of the company enclosed in Sir Ian Malcolm's despatch No. 34 Commercial of July 13, 1922 recorded the cession of one of the French directorships to a Netherlands subject without giving any reason therefor. A clue is however afforded by a private letter of January 10, 1884 from Sir J. Stokes (one of the British directors) to Sir Julian Pauncefote. This letter dealt with the question of the proposed increased British representation on the Board and discussed the wording of a despatch to be addressed by Her Majesty's Government to the British directors, one sentence of which was to be worded as follows:-

Conf. 14034  
p. 72

Ditto:  
p. 73

F.O. 78  
Vol. 3720

"They (Her Majesty's Government) approve of the programme of proposed measures as putting an end to all disputes and insuring the development of the undertaking in the interest of the trade of the world."

Sir J. Stokes/

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British  
Directors'  
despatch No. 4  
Commercial of  
May 6, 1884.  
F.O. 78,  
Vol. 3721.

Sir J. Stokes explained in his letter that the words relating to the trade of the world had been inserted as the result of observations made to Monsieur de Lesseps by several foreign diplomats to the effect that in all the transactions "only English interests have been considered". If the appointment of a Netherlands director were in fact an attempt to meet these criticisms, even in so small a measure, it is noteworthy that Netherlands shipping through the Suez Canal at this period ranked immediately after that of Great Britain and France. (The figures of gross tonnage for 1883 of the principle maritime countries whose shipping used the canal were as follows:-

Great Britain	-	6,136,837.01
France	-	782,133.36
Netherlands	-	309,583.18
Germany	-	213,666.33
Italy	-	195,101.85.)

British  
Directors'  
despatch No. 51  
Political of  
Aug. 5, 1884.  
F.O. 78,  
Vol. 3720.

3. Further evidence that the Council of Administration were influenced in their choice of directors (other than French and British) by the amount of a country's shipping passing through the Canal is furnished by their attitude regarding the appointment of Belgian and German representatives. At a meeting of directors held on August 5th, 1884 to discuss the filling of vacancies after approval had been obtained for a total of thirty-two directors, Monsieur de Lesseps proposed the appointment of a Belgian, Baron de Cators, explaining that he did so as the result of a special request received from the King of the Belgians, whose direct appeal he felt unable to refuse.

Monsieur de Lesseps/


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Monsieur de Lesseps called attention however to the comparative unimportance of Belgian shipping passing through the Canal (actually she came tenth on the list for 1883, with a gross tonnage of 23,450.36) and mentioned that other countries - from whom no applications for seats on the Board had been received - appeared to have prior claims. In the circumstances Baron de Cators was nominated, and in due course elected. On his death in 1899, however, the Board decided that in view of the small interest possessed by Belgium in either the property or the traffic of the Canal, the vacancy should be offered, not to another Belgian, but to a German in view of the very considerable, and rapidly increasing, amount of German shipping passing through the Canal. The German representative was therefore nominated and in due course elected.

British  
Directors'  
despatch No.8  
Commercial of  
April 21, 1899  
Confl. 7669,  
No. 17.

FOREIGN OFFICE.

July 23, 1938.



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No. 767.  
(140/21/38).

SECRET

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
ALEXANDRIA, 64

June 29, 1938.

My Lord,

In my telegram No. 245 of April 11th I expressed concern at the apparent possibility that His Majesty's Government might be willing, in certain conditions, to support a request for an Italian director on the Board of the Suez Canal Company. In the event the Italian Government did not, so far as I am aware, raise the matter during the Rome Conversations, and I was relieved to learn meantime that nothing would be done by His Majesty's Government in the matter without full consultation with all the British authorities concerned, including His Majesty's Representative at Cairo.

2. Having now had the opportunity to consider the matter more fully I have the honour to place before Your Lordship the conclusions reached. It seems to me that the objections to conceding to Italy a seat on the Canal Board can be classed under two different heads: (a) the fact (as pointed out by Mr. Beckett at the Interdepartmental meeting of March 17th) that it would be the thin end of the wedge towards the progressive internationalisation of the Company's Board on the basis that countries were entitled to representation on the Board in proportion to the amount of their tonnage passing through the Canal; and (b) the practical difficulties from the angle of the security and defence of the Canal.

/3.

The Right Honourable  
Viscount Halifax,

K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
etc., etc., etc.,

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65 2.

3. As regards (a), the concession of a seat to Italy would obviously give weight to the theory that a country was entitled to representation on the basis of its tonnage using the Canal. This would probably lead in the course of time to Italian requests for increased representation, which would be supported by the fact that Italian tonnage has trebled since 1933 and now occupies second place to the United Kingdom (as against fifth place in 1933) with a total tonnage which is already over one-quarter that of the United Kingdom (as compared with under one-ninth in 1933). Further, Germany now holds third place not so very far behind Italy and ahead of both Holland and France; and there would seem no valid reason why Germany - or indeed Japan - should not claim to be represented on the Board.

4. A further point is that if Italy were conceded representation on the Board of the Canal and this were to lead to the appointment of representatives of other countries and generally to the progressive internationalisation of the Company's Board (and possibly, eventually, of its management as well) it would affect very seriously our long term policy towards the Canal. In my secret despatch No. 458 of April 22nd I agreed with the view expressed in Your Lordship's despatch No. 263 (J 656/73/16) of March 5th that it was desirable at the present juncture to avoid precipitating the question of the future of the Canal, and I expressed the view that it would be wise to avoid committing ourselves to any scheme for the future administration of the Canal until the time was ripe for negotiating a renewal of the concession. It has, however, always seemed to me that when the time did come for negotiating a renewal of the concession we

/should

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66<sub>3</sub>.

should aim at securing a larger participation in the control of the Canal, although, as mentioned in paragraphs 9 and 10 of your despatch No. 263, it is a moot point whether it would pay us better to work for this end through co-operation with the Egyptians or the French. But whatever might prove eventually to be the best policy, it is clear that matters would be very greatly complicated if the Board (and possibly the administration as well) had meanwhile been progressively internationalised, beginning with the admission of an Italian element. It seems inevitable that such internationalisation would make it more difficult to secure arrangements for the future administration of the Canal which would be satisfactory from the point of view of British interests.

5. As regards (b), defence, I find it difficult to accept the view expressed in paragraph 5 of the letter of March 24th from the Admiralty enclosed in Your Lordship's despatch No. 399 (J 1157/38/16) of March 29th that "On the face of it, it would seem that an Italian Director, although in a good strategic position for this purpose, would not be able to obtain any information which would not be obtained already by a more devious route, e.g. through the Egyptian Directors". In the first place it may not necessarily be correct to assume that the Italians could rely upon the indiscretion or venality of Egyptian Directors; such an assumption might equally well apply to all the defence measures which we are obliged to take through, or in conjunction with, the Egyptian authorities, but, so far as our experience and knowledge go, it is, generally speaking,

/not

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67<sup>4</sup>.

not justified. Secondly, although it is true that the conduct of the Canal Company's business is to a great extent concentrated in the hands of a small inner circle of French officials, a persistent and energetic Italian Director would surely be able to unearth, should he so desire, much information as to what was going on. Unless arrangements in the Suez Canal Company differ from those of any normal business concern, I should have deemed it difficult for the management consistently to block all attempts by a particular director to inform himself as to the Company's activities. It seems legitimate to assume, moreover, that if the Italian Government were to press for a representative on the Board such appointment would not be divorced from his intelligence value since, apart from prestige, neither the commercial nor psychological value of a single director on so large a board would prima facie be great. The tight hold which, so I am told, the Italian Government used to keep over Italian officials in the League Secretariat at Geneva, and the extent to which it was reputed to use them for intelligence purposes, points a lesson. Furthermore, if the principle of representation on a tonnage basis were accepted the danger of leakage would be greatly increased, since a bloc of Italian and German Directors might come into existence from whom it would obviously be even more difficult to conceal matters.

6. But if I am convinced that it would be unwise to admit an Italian to a seat on the Company's Board, I am less clear how such a claim, if made, should best be resisted. The presence of a Dutch Director on the

/Board

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68  
5.

Board is an awkward fact. A perusal of Sir Ian Malcolm's textbook on the Suez Canal shows that the Dutch Directorship came into being in June 1884 by the concession to Holland of a French Directorship. There were then twenty French, three British and one Dutch Directors. In August 1884 the Board was increased by eight seats, seven of which went to the United Kingdom and one to Belgium. The Belgian Director was replaced by a German in 1899, who was removed from the Board as a result of the War. On the face of it it would be difficult to resist the Italian demand for a seat in view of the fact that Italy has now a colonial empire to the East of the Canal rivalling - on paper only, it is true - that of Holland in the Far East, and that Italian tonnage is now nearly twice that of Dutch tonnage. But it is not clear why the Dutch appointment was made in June 1884, and if the circumstances could be ascertained it might be possible to show that the appointment was personal and had nothing to do with giving Holland as a country representation on the Board. I suggest that this point is worth research.

7. A further point which I think should be looked into is the question of the shareholding, if any, of the Italian Government or Italian nationals in the Suez Canal. This is a point on which it is not possible to obtain information from British sources at this end, although my impression is that Italy has certainly no important holding in the Canal. It is, however, always possible that the Italian Government might seek to acquire a certain holding in the Canal in order to back its claims to representation on the Board; and although I appreciate that it may be very difficult to obtain

/precise

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6.

precise information as to the exact extent to which Canal shares are held by Italian subjects, I think it would be useful for this aspect of the matter to be gone into also.

8. The strongest argument, so it seems to me, against the right of Italy to representation on the Board on the basis of her tonnage or imperial interests, lies in the fact that, apart from the case of Holland, the present Board bears no logical relationship to the commercial or strategical interests of the various countries concerned. France, with a tonnage of 5% of the total and comparatively limited interests in the Far East, has a large absolute majority on the Board: and the United Kingdom is obviously very greatly under-represented on any basis, whether from the point of view of shareholding, of tonnage using the Canal, or of strategic and Imperial interests East of the Canal. Although I notice that the Marquis de Vogué is recorded as being not disinclined to consider favourably an Italian request for representation, I should have thought that the French Government could be counted upon if necessary to oppose any sort of reconstruction of the Board on the basis of international representation, since this would obviously threaten the present French predominance.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Commander-in-Chief, the General Officer Commanding, the Air Officer Commanding, and the Naval Liaison Officer at Port Said.

I have the honour to be,  
 With the highest respect,  
 My Lord,  
 Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,



AMBASSADOR.

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No.42  
(J 2714/38/16)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

28th July, 1938.

SECRET

Sir,

With reference to your despatch No.16 of the 4th April relative to a possible request by the Italian Government for support for the election of an Italian director to the Board of the Suez Canal Company, I am directed by Viscount Halifax to transmit to you herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador in Egypt on this subject, together with a copy of a memorandum prepared in this department regarding the circumstances attending the election of Netherlands, Belgian and German directors to the Board of the Suez Canal Company.

2. I am to request that you will furnish such information as you can obtain regarding the extent to which shares or debentures in the Suez Canal Company are held by the Italian Government or Italian nationals.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Sir Ian Malcolm, K.C.M.G.  
10, Avenue d'Iéna,  
Paris, XVI.

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J

J 2587  
71  
JUL 1938

Registry Number } 2887/38/16.

FROM Sir M. Lampson  
Cairo.

No. 858 (7/43/38).

Secret.

Dated 19th July 1938.

Received in Registry 22nd July 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Italian propaganda in Egypt.

Refers to Cairo despatch No. 545 of 12th May 1938 (J 2047/G).

Transmits copies of two reports received from the Cairo City Police pointing to a recrudescence of Italian press activities hostile to Great Britain, which had diminished since the beginning of the Anglo-Italian discussions which led to the Rome agreement. Suggests that Italian impatience at delay in implementation of that agreement, referred to in Rome telegram to Foreign Office No. 133 Saving (W 9265/8641) is manifesting itself in renewed attacks on British policy in Palestine and Egypt.

Last Paper.

J 2114

References.

(Print.)

(From dispatch of)  
J 25 Aug 11  
F. 14. W.O.  
L. C.O.  
(Comes:)  
Aug 11  
F. 19. Rome (Comes:)  
Aug 12

(Action completed.)

30.7.38

(Ind/x.)

63  
10

Next Paper.

J. 3038  
(R) 1561/23-22

(Minutes.)

The enclosed article is misleading and dangerous. But until the Anglo-Italian Agreement comes into force we are not in a position to complain in Rome. The record of performance is at present in favour of the Italians, and we must expect such evidence of their impatience. The articles on Palestine do not appear to have been particularly inaccurate. The position there is bad enough without any misrepresentation.

By copy  
Sept  
Cairo  
1938  
Gave a copy to the  
Compt. but that to Rome plan? 1938

This recrudescence of Italian anti-British  
propaganda /

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propaganda in <sup>Egypt</sup>~~Palestine~~ will require watching. I think that we should instruct the Embassy to watch this and to report.

V. Cavendish *[Signature]*

26th July 1938.

DVK  
28/7

File Number  
**J 38**

EGYPTIAN

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No. 858.

(7/45/38)

SECRET.

2887 38 16

BRITISH EMBASSY,

RAMLEH,

19th July, 1938.

72

My Lord,

I have the honour to refer to my despatch No. 545 of May 12th regarding Italian propaganda in Egypt and to transmit herewith copies of two reports which I have received from the Cairo City Police on the same subject.

2. These reports point to a recrudescence of Italian press activities hostile to Great Britain which had, as I reported in my above-mentioned despatch, diminished since the beginning of the Anglo-Italian discussions which led to the Rome Agreement. It may be that Italian impatience at the delay in the full implementation of that agreement referred to in Lord Perth's telegram to you No. 133 Saving of July 2nd is manifesting itself in renewed attacks on British policy in Palestine and Egypt.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant.

*Hubert L. Ramsden*  
AMBASSADOR.

The Right Honourable

Viscount Halifax,

K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,

&c., &c., &c.,

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COPY.

July 10th, 1938.

199/38.

The Director General,  
Public Security Department,  
Ministry of Interior.

The Italian newspapers sold in Egypt which have for some time refrained from publishing anything of a nature to hamper British operations in Palestine, have this week published long articles on Palestine with flaring headlines. The following are some of the extracts:-

In spite of the fact that the Egyptian government show reserve as far as Palestine is concerned, the Moslems of the Nile valley are all in solid accord with the Nationalists of the Holy Land. Speeches in the Azhar, which is the largest theological Islamic institute in the world, are of a violent nature. In clubs and coffee shops the sympathy is shown to the Arab cause.

Extracts from all the Arabic press are published freely and it is stated that the Grand Mufti is more determined than ever to destroy the effects of the Balfour declaration.

Attention is likewise drawn to foreign shareholders and capitalists to the great danger and loss of thousands of tons of oil from the sabotage which is increasing to the Irakian pipe-line.

for COMMANDANT,  
Cairo City Police.

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COPY

July 10th, 1938.

198/38.

The Director General,  
Public Security Department,  
Ministry of Interior.

The following article was sent to Marco ROMILIO of the Propaganda and Press Bureau in Rome by DADONE, last week. The article was composed by Mr. Ruggere DAMIANI, under the heading: "The difficult applications of the treaty. Grave differences of opinion on military questions. The chief of the military mission has had to leave Egypt. The English want a real military town."

The precipitous departure of the chief of the British military mission in Egypt is stated to be that he wishes to consult the competent authorities in London, but the public hostility shown by the Egyptian public and also official Egyptian circles leave no doubt that there will be a change at the head of the British military mission.

According to the terms of the treaty, the Mission should only be instituted in a consultative capacity, but, instead, the Mission immediately occupied itself with British rearmament in the country and complete control of the Egyptian army.

The Mission should likewise according to the treaty have been constituted with a dozen senior officers at most, whereas in reality the numbers employed by the Mission are nearly 100 with fabulous salaries which is a heavy drain on the budget, and by its activities makes the Egyptian feel that their independence is far from a reality. A great deal of discontent has also been shown by superior officers in the Egyptian army owing to unfair promotions. MOHAMED MAHMOUD Pasha has decided to go to London with the Minister of War to discuss the whole question and also to put forward the views that he has always held that the expenditure on the barracks

/in

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75<sup>2</sup>.

in the Canal zone is far too heavy. Egypt is disposed to pay a million pounds for the barracks and allow Great Britain to supervise their construction. This would take away the nightmare that Egypt has been faced with of spending twelve million pounds. Great Britain can, however, carry out any further military works on the Canal that she wishes, but at her own expense.

The question of constructing an ammunition factory in Egypt will also be discussed.

The recent general attack in the Egyptian press against the enormous expenditure put forward by Great Britain as being necessary to build the barracks on the Canal zone is justified, the press states that the Suez Canal zone chosen by the British to build barracks is to become the centre of the British Imperial army, and that Great Britain when all these barracks are built has no intention of leaving, as stated in the clauses of the treaty, after 20 years, but will occupy the Canal zone permanently. The treaty of "alliance and friendship" was merely carried out in order to make Egypt carry the burden and expense of having British troops stationed on the Canal.

It is quite easy to understand the point of view of the present Government in not following the British point of view. Not only do they fear the enormous expenses involved, but also the fact that Great Britain intends to make the Canal zone at the Suez end a second Gibraltar. It is quite natural and just that Egypt, jealous of her newly obtained independence, wishes to fight the new danger before it is too late and to dispense with any foreign force in her territory as soon as possible.

for COMMANDANT,  
Cairo City Police.

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J

J 3144

73

AUG 1938

Registry Number J 3144/38/16.

FROM Sir Ian Malcolm  
to Mr. Cavendish  
Bentinck.

No. Confidential.

Dated 6th August, 1938.  
Received in Registry } 9th August, 1938.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Question of representation of Italy on the Board of the Suez Canal Company.

Refers to his despatch No. 46 of 1st August, 1938 (J 3038/38/16).

Transmits a copy of a letter of 4th August, 1938, from the Director General of the Suez Canal Company replying to Sir Ian Malcolm's enquiries as to the principles which guide the Company in appointing representatives of foreign Powers to the Board of the Suez Canal Company.

Last Paper.

J 3038

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Copies sent to Cairo,  
B. of T. Tary. +  
Admiral. in J 3038.

J. G. Rome.

no. 1267 Aug. 15  
(Cones. in J 2714,  
J 3038 + J 3144)

(Action completed.)

25.8.38

(Index.)

Next Paper.

J 3172

(Minutes.)

As Sir I. Malcolm suggests,  
M. Bonnet's reply is very  
satisfactory. Shipping interests  
can justify a directorship,  
but confer no right to  
a directorship. Moreover  
the Board would hardly  
nominate an Italian until  
relations between France & the  
U.K. and Italy had become  
"frankly cordial".  
? Copy as J 3038.

Southern Dept. 1118

I. Wilson. 4 Aug

It is clear that for the present 10/8  
we can rely on the French to block any attempt  
by

16757 3/38 F.O.P.

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by the Italians to have a director on the Board of the Suez Canal Co.

As well as sending copies of this despatch on J. 3038, I think we should send to Rome copies of Sir M. Lampro's despatch in J. 2714, our despatch to Sir J. Mervin in J. 2714, J. 3038 and this paper.

Perhaps we should also reply to Sir J. Mervin agreeing that we should thank Monsieur Edgar Bonnet for his letter. *re*

11/VIII.

Rm would  
interestingly appreciate  
this. *in*

No letter need  
now go to  
Sir J. Mervin  
*WGL*  
16/8

File Number

J 38

EGYPTIAN

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TELEGRAMS, KILMARTIN.  
TEL. 2 KILMARTIN.

POLTALLOCH,  
KILMARTIN,  
LOCHGILPHEAD,  
ARGYLL.

J 3144 80  
AUG 1938  
6th August, 1938.

Suez Canal. Confidential.

Unnumbered.

Dear Cavendish Bentinck,

You may remember that on Monday last I sent you from Paris an interim reply to your letter about the appointment of an Italian to the Suez Canal Board. I told you that I should immediately make further enquiries from the Authorities as to the principle which guided them in making such appointments.

To-day, I have received a reply from the Director-General, of which I enclose a copy herewith. I think you will find it satisfactory, and I propose to thank him for it. I do not think it necessary to make any comments.

Yours very sincerely

*Ian Macdonald*

Encl. 1.

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Cie du Canal de Suez

Le Directeur General.

COPY.

Paris, le 4 aout. 1938.

Cher Sir Ian,

Je réponds à votre lettre du 31 juillet par laquelle vous me faites part des questions que se pose le Foreign Office relativement à une candidature italienne au Conseil de la Compagnie de Suez.

Le principe fondamental est, sans aucun doute, --conforme--ment aux Statuts--que les administrateurs sont choisis parmi les actionnaires représentant les nations les plus intéressées à l'entreprise, c'est-à-dire, les nations possédant les fractions les plus importantes du capital de la Compagnie. A ce titre, une candidature italienne ne saurait se justifier; ni l'Etat italien, ni les particuliers italiens ne possèdent un nombre appréciable de nos actions.

A ce principe fondamental cependant, il en a été, en certaines occasions, substitué un autre dont il a été fait diverses applications. Depuis 1883, vous le savez, il a été introduit dans le Conseil un certain nombre d'Administrateurs choisis en tant que représentants, non pas des actionnaires, mais de l'armement ou du commerce international. C'est à ce titre que siègent au Conseil 7 membres britanniques; sans doute, cette large part leur a-t-elle été faite, non seulement

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parce qu'ils représentaient la majeure partie de notre clientèle, mais parce qu'ils appartenaient à une nation propriétaire d'une forte portion du capital de la Compagnie. Il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'il y a là un précédent d'autant mieux susceptible d'être invoqué que le bénéfice en a été étendu à d'autres pays que la Grande-Bretagne. C'est en effet comme représentant de la marine marchande néerlandaise qu'un Administrateur hollandais fait partie du Conseil; un Administrateur allemand y siégeait autrefois dans les mêmes conditions.

C'est sur quoi peut s'appuyer aujourd'hui une candidature italienne. L'Italie, en effet, occupe aujourd'hui par l'importance de son trafic le deuxième rang parmi les nations clientes du Canal.

En revanche, il n'a jamais été admis par le Conseil d'introduire en son sein "des candidats importants suggérés par d'importantes nations" simplement parce que celles-ci étaient désireuses de participer à la gestion de la Compagnie.

Mais, quel que soit le principe invoqué en faveur d'une candidature quelconque, le Conseil de la Compagnie est, bien entendu, tout à fait maître de son choix et entièrement libre d'apprécier s'il est ou non opportun de faire appel à tel ou tel représentant de telle ou telle nation.

Puis-je ajouter à titre personnel que la nomination

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d'un Administrateur italien ne pouvant--qu'on le veuille ou non--ne pas comporter quelque signification politique, il me paraît difficile que le Conseil puisse l'envisager autrement que dans une atmosphère européenne détendue, ni--en particulier--avant que les rapports entre la Grande-Bretagne et la France, d'une part, l'Italie, d'autre part, soient devenus franchement cordiaux.

J'espère, cher Sir Ian, avoir répondu clairement aux questions qui préoccupent le Foreign Office et que vous m'avez posées, et je vous prie de me croire votre bien sincèrement dévoué.

(Signed)

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J

J 3172

12 AUG 1938

Registry Number } 3172/38/16

FROM Sir H. Charles,  
Rome.

No. 745  
(265/10/58)

Dated 10th Aug. 1938.

Received in Registry 12th Aug. 1938.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Italian attitude towards Suez Canal question.

Summarises three articles published in "Stampa" on 5th, 7th, and 9th August by Signor Lovato, its Cairo correspondent, containing the results of an enquiry into the Suez Canal question. Signor Lovato denounces Suez Canal Company as the most socially unjust enterprise of exploitation of present times, and, after calling attention to the importance of the Canal to Italy and Germany, demands the right to ask for appointment of Italian representatives on Board of Directors.  
(Copy Cairo).

Last Paper.

J 3144.

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Off. Rome.  
No. 1285 Aug 19  
F. A. Cairo.  
No. 1082 Aug 23  
F. H. Admiralty.  
T. H. B. of T.  
(Covers) Aug 23

(Action completed.)

DP.  
25.8.38

(Index.)

176/8

Next Paper.

J 3428

(Minutes.)

I fear that we must expect such better articles from time to time. While the Italian Govt. have made no request for an expert in the event of an Italian candidate being put forward for a vacant directorship of the Suez Canal Co., we know from private approaches by an Italian shipowner to one of the British directors, that the Italians would like a directorship. For the

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the present, however, the French  
are dead against the idea  
of an Italian dominionship  
(J3144) and it is they  
who will have to bear  
the main burden of  
repelling Italian efforts  
in this direction.

? Copy to Admiralty  
Treasury  
BOT

Sutherland Dept.  
See original  
minutes 14/17/8.

I. Wilson, Young  
16/8

The arguments advanced in these articles are typical of the present state of mind of the Italians. According to these arguments, Italy has the right to demand a complete revision of the statutes of a Company to which she makes large payments if these statutes do not happen to suit her. Signor Lovato states that "the lion's share of the dividends go to His Majesty's Government". I am not aware exactly <sup>what</sup> of the proportion a 'lion's share' is supposed to be, but I assume that it is over 50%. For the financial year 1937, H.M. Government received, in respect of their holding in the Suez Canal Company, Frs. 291,293,926.96. The total amount distributed in dividends, bonuses, etc., was Frs. 852,236,619.71.

Signor /

File  
J

EGY

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Minutes.

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Signor Lovato alleges that Italy is the nation which bears the heaviest burden of the passage through the Canal. In 1937, 47.3% of the tonnage passing through the Canal was under the British flag, whilst Italian tonnage only amounted to 16.1% of the total traffic. The recent increase in the dividend paid by the Company in 1937 is a semblance rather than a reality, owing to the depreciation of the franc. Signor Lovato, when describing the Suez Canal as "the most scandalously lucrative enterprise of modern times" and "a mere Company whose dividends denounce it manifestly to be a robbery", omits to mention that the shipping dues of the Company have been progressively decreased by 6d. <sup>a ton</sup> from the 1st July 1936 and 1/- from the 1st April 1937. Further decreases are taking place this year. These decreases in dues are of greater benefit to Italy than to ourselves; ~~as~~, whilst a decrease in dues is helpful to our shipping interests, it <sup>diminishes</sup> ~~decreases~~ the receipts and the dividends received by H.M. Government.

The attitude of the Board of the Suez Canal Company towards the question of the election of an Italian director is explained in J 3144 and this subject has also been discussed in minutes on Sir Miles Lampson's despatch in J 2714. If any useful purpose would be thereby served, it might be worth while to send a despatch to Lord Perth, correcting the gross misstatements contained in the three articles in the "Stampa", summarised in this despatch.

*It would, in my opinion, be well worth while to do so: the Embassy would then be able to refute false statements in the publicity - at least in connection.*

*16th August 1938.*

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,

ROME.

10th August, 1938.

No. 745.

(265/10/38)

J 3172

My Lord,

I have the honour to report that the "Stampa" has published three articles (August 5th, 7th, 9th) by Signor Lovato, its Cairo correspondent, containing the results of an inquiry into the Suez Canal question. Signor Lovato describes the Suez Canal Company as constituting, from the financial-administrative standpoint, "the greatest robbery of modern times and the most impudently lucrative and socially unjust enterprise of exploitation of the contemporary age." He emphasizes two points: first, that, thanks to the Disraeli-Rothschild coup, the lion's share of the dividends go to His Majesty's Government; and secondly, that Italy is the nation which bears the heaviest burden for the passage through the Canal. "Proletarian Italy", he says, "is the nation which pays most of all, to the enormous profit of other people who are already rich, and receives nothing at all".

2. The creation of the Empire had given rise to "vital and historical exigencies which no force can suffocate and which cannot bear any longer the strangling at Suez." Italy, as the nation which relatively paid most, possessed (together with Germany who held the third place in Canal traffic after Great Britain and Italy) the right to demand a complete revision of the Statutes of the Company.

3...

The Right Honourable  
the Viscount Halifax, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
etc., etc., etc.

FOREIGN OFFICE.

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- 2 -

3. Signor Lovato comes to the following three conclusions

1) "International justice and the primary needs of the  
"peoples demand that the most scandalously lucrative enter-  
"prise of modern times, which constitutes an enormous unlawful  
"advantage to a few at the expense of all, is soon brought to  
"an end."

2) "Enterprises of exploitation cannot ignore the vital  
"exigencies of peoples, otherwise reasons of force majeure  
"would lead to counter-action using all possible means; and  
"the Suez Canal Company is a mere Company, whose dévidends  
"denounce it manifestly to be a robbery;"

3) "It rests with Italy, as the chief contributor, to  
"take the initiative towards a statutory and administrative  
"revision of the Company. The Rome Government, in the first  
"place, is entitled to ask for the appointment of representa-  
"tives of its own on the Board of Directors."

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His  
Majesty's Representative at Alexandria.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant

*Horly harles*

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No. 1285.  
(J 3172/38/16).

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.  
19th August, 1938.

Sir,

In your despatch No. 745 (265/10/38) of the 10th August you summarised three articles contributed to the "Stampa" by that paper's Cairo correspondent regarding the Suez Canal Company.

2. In these articles, Signor Lovato asserts that "the lion's share of the dividends go to His Majesty's Government." For the financial year 1937 His Majesty's Government received, in respect of their holding in the Suez Canal Company, 291,293,926.96 francs, while the total amount distributed in dividends, bonuses, etc., was 852,236,619.71 francs. Signor Lovato alleges that Italy is the nation which bears the heaviest burden of the Suez Canal dues. In 1937, 47.3% of the tonnage passing through the Canal was under the British flag, whilst Italian tonnage only amounted to 16.1% of the total traffic. Signor Lovato moreover, when describing the Suez Canal Company as "the most scandalously "lucrative enterprise of modern times" and "a mere company "whose dividends denounce it manifestly to be a robbery", omits to mention that the shipping dues of the Company have been progressively decreased (by 6d per ton as from the 1st July 1936 and by 1/- per ton as from the 1st April 1937). These decreases, which are to be continued this year, are of greater benefit to Italy than to this country; whilst a decrease in dues is helpful to British shipping interests, the receipts and dividends

Sir Noel Charles, Bt., C.M.G., M.C.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
Rome,

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dividends received by His Majesty's Government are thereby diminished. Finally the recent increase in the dividend paid by the Company is a semblance rather than a reality, owing to the depreciation of the franc.

3. The information in the preceding paragraph is furnished in order to enable you, at least in conversation, to refute false statements such as those published by the "Stampa".

4. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Cairo.

I am, with great truth,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(For the Secretary of State)

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No. 233/38.

8th August, 1938.

The Director General,  
Public Security Department,  
Ministry of the Interior.

The following report translated from the Italian, was sent by Ruggero Damiani to Cav. Marco Pomilio of the propaganda and press bureau in Rome for publication in the Italian press in Italy.

The departure of General Cornwall head of the British Military Mission in Egypt did not come as a great surprise in local circles it was felt that if he had stayed on the strained relations which came about between Egypt and England would have become more acute as far as the divergence of views between the higher Egyptian Army Council and the War Office in Egypt and the British Military Mission were concerned.

The whole question cannot be said to have been settled as the supply of dud ammunition to the Egyptian Army by Great Britain is still a very sore point, and according to several Arabic newspapers the Minister of War in Egypt has held up all payments due to Great Britain for the supply of arms and ammunition until a settlement of this vexed question can be made.

The Egyptian public opinion is inclined to think that the British Military Mission has established itself as a commercial concern as much as anything else and has been dumping in Egypt all sorts of old arms and ammunition which would not have been accepted by other countries.

It is likewise stated that owing to the Egyptian soldier following British methods he costs the state £E.90 a year which is far in excess of what the soldier cost in the time of Mohd. Aly who had an army of 250,000 men

/although

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although the Budget of the country was not in such a statistic financial state as it is at present.

Greece is a free country and yet is far better off than Egypt from a military point of view, she is free to purchase when she likes and how she likes, Irak who started to buy from Great Britain realized her mistake and is now purchasing from Czechoslovakia and Italy who offer better terms and better material.

The National Deputies in Egypt and their followers consider that as long as Great Britain interferes in the internal affairs of Egypt whether it be Army, Air Force, or Navy, Egypt can never be an Independent Country in the real sense of the word. From another point of view certain sections consider that unless Egypt is careful in the expenditure of the Country's money they will be faced with a deficit and will have to borrow from Great Britain and put herself still further under the obligation of Great Britain (actually however Egypt has a reserve fund of nearly three milliards of Liras or ££.30 million pounds) she has had to borrow 2½ million this year from the reserve fund to balance the budget.

The principal difficulties however seem to be in organization and technic throughout the Services owing to the forced rearmament which Egypt is going through and the inability of Great Britain to supply the necessary arms and ammunition to Egypt owing to her own inadequate system in supplying her own Army, Navy and Air Force with the material required.

It was decided that Egypt should have a Navy, but as Great Britain cannot supply the Naval units at the present time which were to include, two destroyers, two submarines, two mine sweepers, and two what is known in Italy as Mas Boats, the Egyptian Government have had to be satisfied with a few Naval guns which have been installed

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Agami and Bab el Arab.

Personnel for the Egyptian Navy which comprise 12 officers 8 Engineers and 120 sailors have been trained on board British Naval Units in readiness for the Naval Units which it is hoped some day may be supplied to the so called Egyptian Navy.

All this has naturally made a bad impression on Egyptian public opinion and even the most favourably disposed consider that Egypt should be free to purchase her armaments whether ships, aeroplanes or Army equipment from whatever country they like. An impression was made when our Deputy said if we have to await the supply of men and material from Great Britain which may have to arrive in case of war round the Cape of Good Hope all would be finished for Egypt.

(Signed) Selim Zaki.

For Actg/Commandant C.C.P.

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J

J 3487

SEP 95

Registry Number J 3487/38/16

FROM Foreign Office  
Minute (Mr. Kelly)

No.

Dated 7th Sept. 1938.

Received in Registry 9th Sept. 1938.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Italian Jews in Egypt.

Records interview with Mr. Stanley Parker, editor of the Egyptian Gazette, who said that the new Italian anti-Semitic policy was likely to have serious repercussions in the Italian colony in Egypt. In instancing prominent Jews in Egypt who had withdrawn their support, Mr. Parker suggested that the anti-Semitic movement of Italian Fascism was clearly inspired by anxiety to keep in step with Germany and not by Near Eastern considerations.

Last Paper.

J 3428.

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Sp. Mr. Bateman  
(Cairo) from Mr.  
Kelly.  
Sept 15  
4-10-38  
Oct.

(Action completed.)

BP.  
1.11.38

(Index.)

110  
170

Next Paper.

J 3489  
(J 3573)

(Minutes.)

This movement should considerably facilitate our handling <sup>problems</sup> ~~difficulties~~ in the Canal Zone. Hitherto it has been hard to find big contracting firms operating in Egypt, devoid of Italian interests. The Pinto brothers are particularly strong in this line of business, and if divorced from Fascist Italy will no longer constitute a serious danger.

I submit a draft to Mr. Bateman

an interesting point.

P. L. Rose

om  
14/9

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J 3487  
9 SEP 1938

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Mr. Stanley Parker, editor of the Egyptian Gazette, who called on me in connexion with the affairs of his paper this afternoon, told me <sup>incidentally</sup> that the new Italian anti-Semitic policy was likely to have serious repercussions in the Italian colony in Egypt. He had just been talking to Maître Alexander, the leading Anglo-Jewish lawyer in Cairo who is in London, and the latter shared this view strongly. Mr. Parker who has generally lived in Alexandria, told me that the Italian Jews in Alexandria were a very large element of the wealthy and influential part of the Italian colony and that they had hitherto been to a man ardent supporters of Italian interests. The Mosseris who are near relations of Maître Alexander have been particularly active in this sense and will certainly now withdraw their support. Another Jewish firm, Messrs. Pinto, of Alexandria have been in the habit of buying and distributing 40 copies of the Giornale d'Oriente and it is the head of this firm who, according to the English press this morning, has just torn up in the presence of the Italian Consul a will in which he had made large legacies for Italian institutions and charities. Mr. Parker is so convinced of the importance of the Jewish element in the Italian colony that he regards the anti-Semitic movement of Italian Fascism as clearly inspired by anxiety to keep step with Germany and not by Near Eastern considerations or at any rate as not having been in any way influenced by consultation with Italian agents in Egypt.

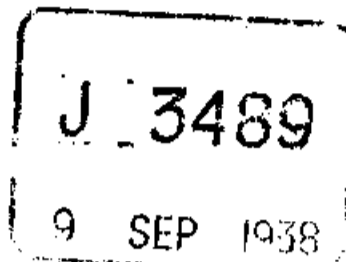
*OKelly*

7th September, 1938.

*Southern Dept.  
Do you think it worth while pursuing  
this with the Embassy in Egypt?  
I think it would be  
interesting to hear Cairo's views.  
Stilly  
7/9*

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No. 811  
(265/19/38)



British Embassy,

ROME.

7th September, 1938.

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My Lord,

With reference to your despatch No. 1285 of August 19th (J 3172/38/16) I have the honour to transmit to Your Lordship herewith a note containing a summary of two recent articles in the "Messaggero" which present a more sober statement of the Italian case for a reduction of the Suez Canal dues than that presented by the "Stampa".

2. On receipt of Your Lordship's despatch I sent Count Ciano a personal letter refuting Signor Lovato's allegations and setting out the true facts. It may not therefore be a coincidence that the second article in the "Messaggero" takes up some of the points made in that despatch.

3. I have sent a copy of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Cairo.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant

*God Charles*

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.G.,  
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
&c., &c., &c.,  
Foreign Office.

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N O T E

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S U E Z   C A N A L

The necessity of a further reduction in the Suez Canal transit dues was stressed in an article published in the "Messaggero" of June 21st last, on the occasion of the annual general meeting of the Suez Canal Company. The writer of the article, who uses the pen-name of Rebur, took note of the fact that the Board of Directors had agreed in principle on such a reduction, which he considered to be opportune and proper not only because of the enormous increase in traffic, but also because certain ships were being diverted to the Cape route in order to avoid the payment of the heavy transit dues. Italy's interest in the matter appeared evident when it was considered that Italian shipping occupied the second place in the Canal traffic.

On September 6th, Rebur raised the question again. He recalled that the Canal transit dues had been already twice reduced, on 1st July, 1936, and on 1st April, 1937. According to the estimates of the Company, these reductions had diminished receipts by 5 percent; but, in his opinion, this decrease was not such as to prevent a further reduction in transit dues. Nor did Rebur believe that the 5 per cent fall in receipts was solely to be ascribed to the reduction in dues, but thought it likely that receipts had decreased as a result of the charges arising from the new agreement with the Egyptian Government. In any case, he argued, when a Company, at a difficult time for the world economic system, made the enormous profits realised by the Suez Canal Company, its best customers were perfectly entitled to demand a fresh and reasonable reduction in transit dues.

Rebur/

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Rebur quoted figures to show the rise in the market price of the Suez Canal shares and the dividends distributed among the shareholders in the years 1928-1937. He also noted that the shares were now almost entirely in French hands and that Great Britain, Italy and Germany made the greatest contribution to the dues; and he mentioned the fact that certain ships preferred the Cape of Good Hope route as proving that the Suez Canal transit dues were too high. By reducing these dues further, the Suez Canal Company would not only accomplish an act of proper generosity but would be acting in its own interest.

7th September, 1938.

British Embassy,  
ROME.

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Translation from Egyptian Mail, 27th August, 1938.  
Al Mokattam, 26th August, 1938.

110

Al-Mokattam

ITALY AND ISLAM.

Under the above title, "Al Mokattam" writes:-

Britain may conclude with Italy the Gentleman's Agreement or Good Neighbourly Pacts but this will have but little effect on the competition and rivalry between the two powers. This condition is, in fact, the cause of the present British policy of armament on a tremendous scale.

Our London correspondent has cabled to us the gist of an article by the diplomatic correspondent of the "News Chronicle" in which he asserts that the new anti-Jewish racial policy recently adopted in Italy is, in a large measure, due to a desire on the part of the Duce to prove to the Moslems of Tunis that he is the Protector of Islam.

The correspondent refers particularly to the Moslems of Tunis as he is convinced that Italy looks forward to the invasion of this French Protectorate in the event of a war between her and France.

We are not concerned here with commenting upon the views expressed by the London daily but we wish to point out that the old policy which used to be adopted by some European powers in the East and which was based upon the support of certain religious creeds is now out of date. France was the champion of Catholicism, while Czarist Russia protected the Orthodox faith.

It should be stated in this connection that oriental nations, realising that a certain power is sincerely standing by them will certainly appreciate the gesture.

In fact, Signor Mussolini never pretended that he was the protector of Islam. It was the British press that, by its clever methods of propaganda, attributed the declaration to him.

Oriental Moslems and non-Moslems will judge the

/Great

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great Powers by what they actually do to them not as a result of any hollow sentiments expressed by them. These are ugly facts which are showing themselves to Britain in Palestine.

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J

J 3573 112

SEP 15

Registry Number } 3573/38/16

FROM Mr. Bateman,  
Cairo.

No. 1039

Dated (7/49/38)

9th Sept. 1938

Received in Registry 19th Sept. 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Italian Jewish community in Egypt.

According to reports, recent anti-Jewish measures of Italian Government have greatly disturbed the large and wealthy Italian-Jewish community in Egypt, who have in the past shown no signs of being opposed to Fascist régime but are now threatening to withdraw deposits from Italian banks and to boycott Italian institutions and merchandise. In the event of Italian Administrative measure being taken against them, they may apply en masse for Egyptian naturalisation. Italian Minister takes a serious view of situation and recently visited Rome in this connexion.

Last Paper.

(J 3451) J 3550

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

This provides independent confirmation of the views expressed by Mr. S. Parker (J 3437). The action of the Italian Minister shows that the matter is quite serious.

*Sumner*  
*Mr. Leaper*  
*24/9*

*P. L. Rose.*

*20/9*

— and Mr. Joseph Smorha a very rich Alexandria Jew came to ask me if his 3 Jew-Italian sons in law could be naturalized British. I said if they wanted to change they had better become Egyptian as our 5 year residence regulation was statutory

*5m*  
*21/9*

(Action completed.)

*Dr.*  
*21.9.38*

(Index.)

*24*  
*6*  
*10*

Next Paper.

*J 3658*  
*(J 3988)*

16757 3438 P.O.P.

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No. 1039.  
(7/49/38).

J 3573  
9 SEP 1938

113  
BRITISH EMBASSY,  
ALEXANDRIA.  
9th September, 1938.

My Lord,

I have the honour to report that, according to reports from the police and other sources, the recent anti-Jewish measures of the Italian Government have caused no little commotion amongst the large and wealthy Italian-Jewish community in Egypt.

2. These people have in the past contributed generously to Italian institutions and, whatever their real feelings, have shown no outward signs of being in any way opposed to the Fascist régime.

3. It is now reported that they are threatening to withdraw their deposits from Italian banks and to boycott Italian institutions and merchandise. It is even suggested that in the event of Italian administrative measures being taken against them here, they may apply en masse for Egyptian naturalisation.

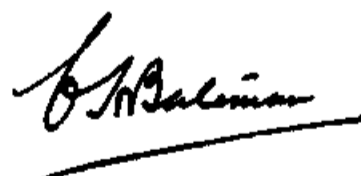
4. For the moment, they are holding their hand pending further developments but the Italian Minister takes a serious view of the situation and recently paid a flying visit to Rome where he is said to have acquainted his Government with the feelings of the Jews of Italian nationality in Egypt.

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,



The Right Honourable  
Viscount Halifax,  
K.G., P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,  
etc., etc., etc.

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J

J 3658  
114  
20 SEP 1938

Registry Number J 3658/38/16

TELEGRAM FROM  
Mr. Bateman, (Cairo).

No. 480 Decypher.  
Secret.

Dated 25th Sept: 1938

Received in Registry  
26th Sept: 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan

### Italian activities in Egypt.

According to reports from secret sources, Italian Government recently made overtures to both King Farouk and Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha to effect that if Egypt guaranteed to remain neutral in event of European war, Italy would undertake not to attack Egypt. Approach is said to have been rejected and loyalty of Egypt to British alliance reaffirmed. Prime Minister has given some confirmation of these reports, and has spoken to Oriental Secretary of Italian Minister's activities.

Last Paper.

J 3573

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

7.14. W.O.  
Q.M.  
Admiral  
Sept 28

(Action completed.)

11.10.38

(Index.)

Next Paper.

J 3725

(Minutes.)

Copy to Sirine Dept.

Sent

I. Wilson Young

26/9

F.D.B. 29/9.  
Southern Dept. as  
29/9

I expect that the Italian Govt. did not really anticipate that the Egyptian Govt. would agree to this proposal but that later on it may be useful to them as they will be able to say that they had offered not to attack Egypt if she remained neutral

V. Cavendish Bentinck  
26. IX.

I don't think this is so: and they would hope at least to weaken the moral of the Egyptian Govt.

O. M. 27/9

They are not meeting with much success in their efforts or doing their reputation with the Egyptians any good.

G.M. 27.9.38.

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J 3658

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26 SEP 1938

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Decypher. Mr. Bateman (Alexandria)  
25th September 1938.  
D. 5.19 p.m. 25th September 1938.  
R. 6.30 p.m. 25th September 1938.

No.480

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SECRET

According to reports from secret sources which will reach you Italian Government recently made overtures to both King Farouk and Prime Minister to the effect that if Egypt guaranteed to remain neutral in the event of European war Italy would give her word not to attack Egypt. This approach is said to have been rejected and loyalty of Egypt to the British alliance reaffirmed.

In recent conversation with me the Prime Minister gave some confirmation of the above by hinting that Italy had been very active lately in throwing [gr.undec] over Egyptian Government with a view to securing their neutrality. To the Oriental Secretary Prime Minister said that the Italian Minister had almost ruined [gr.undec] <sup>has failed in</sup> professed Italy's peaceful intentions towards Egypt.

SEP  
26  
1938  
F.G. REGISTRY.



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J

J 3808

EGYPT AND SUDAN

2 OCT 1938

Registry Number J 3808/38/16

FROM Foreign Office Minute (Mr. Cavendish-Bentinck)

Dated 5th Oct. 1938

Received in Registry 8th Oct. 1938

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Question of representation of Germany and Italy on the Board of the Suez Canal Company.

Reports conversation on 5th October 1938 with Lord Cromer, who said that Chairman of Board of Suez Canal Company has been approached for second time by German Ambassador in Paris with request that a German national should be elected to Board of Suez Canal Company. Discusses question of Italian and German claims to representation on Board. Submits that if His Majesty's Government receive request from German Government for election of a German national they should reply that this is a matter for the Company, but should draw attention to fact that Italy has a stronger title to representation.

Last Paper.

3725

(Minutes.)

References.

Southern Dept.

Central Dept.

M. G. W.

R. Cavendish-Bentinck S. X.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

Although the Admiralty last March did not seem alarmed at the prospect of an Italian director on the Suez Canal Board, I remain convinced that an Italian and/or a German director would be a very great nuisance. First, it would drive us to trying to ensure improper conduct on the part of the French officials and the English and French directors in keeping back certain information from a director, and, secondly, it would complicate any long term policy we may eventually decide to follow with regard to the eventual future of the Canal Concession.

Unfortunately, the demand is going to be difficult to resist indefinitely if strongly pressed. The fundamental principle governing the appointment of directors has been representation of shareholders, and on this basis the only Italian by birth with any claim

17208 5/38 F.O.P.

at /

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3839

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at all is His Holiness the Pope. There is no record that the Netherlands representative was originally appointed as representing Dutch shipping, but M. Bonnet has told us that "C'est en effet comme représentant de la marine marchande néerlandaise qu'un Administrateur hollandais fait partie du Conseil; un Administrateur allemand y siégeait autrefois dans les mêmes conditions"; and, in fact, at the time when a Dutch director was added Dutch shipping came third, i.e. immediately after that of Great Britain and France. Italy has now taken this place, and a claim based on tonnage will be very plausible. Incidentally, on the basis either of tonnage or of shareholding, Great Britain should have a much larger representation than is, in fact, the case; if we have to argue about it, something might be made of this, though it is obviously not an argument which would appeal to the French.

I can only suggest that while dissociating ourselves officially from opposition, we should encourage the directors to delay as long as possible, and that if an Italian, and probably eventually a German, director has to be added, we should do our best to ensure that he only gets to know what is good for him. The prospect nevertheless fills me with misgiving, and it would be much more satisfactory if we could find better grounds for obstruction.

*DV Kelly*

5th October 1938.

*I agree*  
*RACB Dugan*  
*5/10*

*I wish I could think of any way out of this difficulty, but I can't. I greatly dislike in general*

File No. *ber*

*J 38*

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Minutes.

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a policy of delaying tactics followed by grudging concession in cases where ultimate concession is inevitable. There is usually so much more to be gained by being very forth coming at once and so conferring a favour. But I suppose in this particular case our defence interests require that we should hold out and delay admission of an Italian — and later a German, tho less necessarily — as long as we can.

9 M. 6.10.38

We can assume that the Council will not commit themselves in any way without our being consulted — see end of M. Barnett's letter in J 3/44.

over  
7/10

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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J 3608 120

2 001 10 1

Desire of the German Government for election of a German national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company.

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I happened to meet Lord Cromer this morning who has just returned from a meeting of the Board of the Suez Canal Company in Paris. He informed me that the Marquis de Vogüé, Chairman of the Board of the Company, had told him yesterday that he had just been approached for the second time by the German Ambassador in Paris with a request that a German national should be elected to the Board of the Suez Canal Company. Lord Cromer said that the Company could continue for a while to put off returning a definite reply either in the affirmative or the negative to German and Italian requests for representation on their Board, but he thought that we should soon have to face up to this problem as these requests are likely to become more insistent.

This is the first intimation that we have received that the German Government are pressing for the election of a German national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company. The question of the representation of Italy on the Board of the Suez Canal Company has been previously considered, though no official request has been received from the Italian Government on this subject since 1920 when it was decided not to accede to this <sup>demand</sup> ~~request~~ and the Marquis Imperiali, Italian Ambassador here, was informed by the late Sir E. Crowe, that the appointment of an Italian national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company was a matter entirely for the Directors themselves to decide and that H.M. Government could not properly undertake to support any particular candidate. Presumably the Italian Government have not approached us again officially on this subject as they anticipated a rebuff, but articles have....

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have appeared in the Italian press urging that Italy should be represented on the Board of the Company and that the dues should be reduced. We were also informed confidentially by Sir Thomas Royden, one of the British shipping directors on the Board of the Suez Canal Company, that he had been approached privately earlier this year by Signor Cosulich of the Italian Cosulich Line with an enquiry as to whether it would be opportune for the candidature of an Italian national to be put forward for one of the Directorships of the Suez Canal Company that were then vacant. Sir T. Royden consulted the Chairman of the Company and <sup>subsequently</sup> replied to Signor Cosulich in the negative. It is inevitable that the Italian claim for a seat on the Board of the Suez Canal Company will again be put forward. Italian shipping passing through the Suez Canal now ranks immediately after, though a long way behind, the British flag (in the first six months of 1938 British tonnage passing through the Suez Canal amounted to 8,458,000 whilst Italian tonnage was 2,352,000). Moreover, the Suez Canal is the link between Italian East Africa and Italy. In these circumstances Italy has just as good a claim to representation on the Board of the Suez Canal Company as the Netherlands whose tonnage passing through the Suez Canal in the first six months of 1938 amounted to 1,488,000 tons. The reasons for opposing the Italian representation on the Board of the Suez Canal Company have been set out by Sir M. Lampson in his despatch No. 767 of June 29th (J.2714/38/16) <sup>[Flag A]</sup>. This matter was also considered at an interdepartmental meeting held in March, when it was decided that whilst we might be willing to support a request for an Italian Director we should certainly have to consult both the French and Egyptian Governments before taking a definite decision and that we did not propose to initiate such consultations prior to receiving a definite Italian request on the subject.

The...

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The view of the Admiralty was that they would prefer that there should be no Italian representative on the Board of the Company as such an Italian representative might be in a good position to obtain secret information, e.g. the Suez Canal Defence Plan, he might also be able to prevent any steps for a reduction of the number of Italian pilots now employed by the Company and generally to make himself a nuisance and to become a centre of intrigue if it suited the Italian book for him to do so. However, the Admiralty did not wish to press this point of view too strongly as they realised that the Canal has become an important strategic line of communication from the Italian point of view and an application for an Italian representative on the Board would probably be regarded by the Italian Government as a question of prestige and thus assume a psychological importance out of all proportion to its merits. If an official request should be received from the Italian Government for our support for the election of an Italian Director to the Board of the Suez Canal Company when next a vacancy occurs, I would suggest that we should reply that this is a matter for decision by the Board, but that we will inform the British Government Directors who are the only ones to whom we can properly communicate our views that we do not see any objection to the election of an Italian national. If the British nonofficial shipping Directors and the French Directors like to vote against an Italian candidate, so much the better.

As regards the election of a German national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company, I submit that, ~~subject to the concurrence of the Admiralty, Board of Trade and Treasury, we might reply that, until Tanganyika and/or other territory to which the Suez Canal is the route has been given to Herr Hitler as "Danegeld", Germany has less claim than Italy to~~

representation....

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4.

representation on the Company's Board. German shipping <sup>now</sup> ranks third i.e. immediately after Italian and just above Dutch shipping (for the first six months of 1938 German tonnage passing through the Suez Canal amounted to 1,577,000 as compared with 1,488,000 under the Dutch flag). When a Dutch member was elected to the Board of the Company in 1884, Netherlands tonnage passing through the Suez Canal ranked third, i.e. immediately after that of Great Britain and France; Germany and Italy holding fourth and fifth places respectively. A note by the General Manager of the Suez Canal Company on the principles which have hitherto guided the election of Directors will be found in J. 3144/38/16. If we should receive a request from the German Government for support for the election of a German national to the Board of the Suez Canal Company, on which there was a German Director before the war in 1914, I submit that, <sup>subject to the concurrence of the Admiralty, Board of Trade and Treasury,</sup> we should reply that this is a matter for the Company ~~but~~ <sup>and</sup> that we <sup>at the same time</sup> should draw attention to the fact that German tonnage which formerly occupied third place in the traffic passing through the Canal, <sup>at present</sup> ~~now~~ occupies fourth place, coming after that of Italy, who has therefore now a stronger title to representation on the Company's Board.

V. C. *Carver* *Benjamin*

5th October, 1938.